Lex Levitarum

Bishop Meaney

LEX LEVITARUM

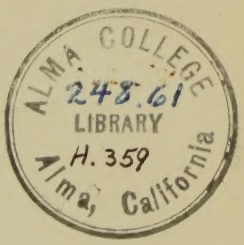
LEX LEVITARUM

Or Preparation for the Cure of Souls

By the RIGHT REV.
JOHN CUTHBERT HEDLEY O.S.B.
BISHOP *of* NEWPORT

With the REGULA PASTORALIS
of
St GREGORY *the* GREAT

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: This is the Law of the Levites. . . . Thus shalt thou order the Levites, touching their charge.
Numbers viii, 23-26



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This Book is Dedicated to

the Right Reverend

THOMAS WILLIAM WILKINSON
D.D.

Lord Bishop of HEXHAM *and*
NEWCASTLE

Who suggested and originated it, and
to whom the Writer is indebted
for many Marks of
Kindness

PREFACE

THE *Regula Pastoralis* of St Gregory the Great is not a book that is out of date. But, like most writings of a long bygone age, it invites a commentary. I should like bishops, pastors and Church students to be familiar with its text. But what I have tried to do in the following pages is to pick out one or two of the holy pope's more profound and fertile views and principles, and to work them out in some detail, for the benefit of Church students. What is required in the training of priests is to combine the wisdom of the fathers with the clear perception of present day needs. No instruction or exhortation addressed to candidates for the sacred ministry will be sure and safe, if it is not grounded upon the Catholic tradition. It is not safe to venture on novel views, smart criticism and modern appreciations of priestly life, without keeping the eye upon that interpretation of the Gospel spirit which is presented to us in the writings of the great fathers of the Church. And among the fathers there is none who holds so high a place of authority in regard to the duty of the care of souls as St Gregory the Great. Leaving on one side the adequate consideration of the pastoral charge itself, I confine myself to the preparation for that charge, so far as it affects the advanced students in our seminaries.

The substance of these pages was given in the form of conferences, to the students of philosophy and divinity of St Cuthbert's College, Ushaw, a year or two ago. To the president, professors and students of that college he now offers this

unpretending book, praying for the blessing of God, that it may contribute in some degree to the deepening and intensifying of that grand pastoral spirit with which Ushaw for a hundred years has inspired the priests who have been happy to call themselves her sons.

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INTRODUCTION

POPE St Gregory the Great ruled the Church from the year 590 to March 12, 604—thirteen years. There was no Emperor in Rome at that time, the Emperor's Exarch residing at Ravenna. But the whole country, up to the very gates of Rome, was in the hands of the fierce Lombards, who ravaged and pillaged without restraint. Within the city there was famine, sickness, and distress of every kind.

The immense labours of St Gregory for the Church at large are well known. He instituted a great reform in Italy, checked the Donatist heresy in Africa, prevented a schism at Constantinople, made his influence strongly felt by the Frankish rulers of Gaul and Germany, brought Spain back from Arianism to the true faith, and effected through St Augustine the conversion of England

His writings are very numerous and important. The best edition of his works is that of the Maurist Benedictines, brought out at Paris in 1705, in four folio volumes. His principal writings are as follows: "Exposition," or as it is generally called, "Morals, on Job"; "Twenty Homilies on the Prophet Ezechiel"; the "Dialogues," in four books—one book (the second) being entirely consecrated to the life of St Benedict; "Registrum Epistolarum," a collection of between 800 and 900 Letters on every kind of subject, addressed to all parts of the world; his famous "Sacramentary" and "Antiphonary" which re-

gulated the holy Liturgy of the Mass; and finally, the "Regula Pastoralis," with which we are at present concerned.

St Gregory has left, in his writings, a singularly vivid picture of his own character. He was a man of great culture, very refined in thought, and very averse from strife or contention. He expresses in many touching passages his strong leaning to the quiet and contemplation of a cloistered life, and his fear of responsibility and authority. The style of his writing is that of a man who unites the epigrammatic and rhetorical manner of the later classics with great directness of expression and the clearness of one who knows exactly what he wants to say. His way of telling a story is especially direct, vivid, sometimes very naïf, and always effective.

It is not uninteresting to give his personal appearance, as described by John the Deacon. This writer was a monk of Monte Cassino, and lived in the ninth century. But he states that in his day there existed, in St Andrew's Monastery on the Cœlian Hill (now the monastery of San Gregorio), a portrait of the holy doctor, painted in the apse of the dormitory of the monks. St Gregory, according to this portrait, which seems to have been executed in his lifetime, as if to remind the brethren of his constant solicitude for discipline and regularity, was of ordinary size and well formed. His face was of a good shape; his beard, of moderate size, was somewhat tawny and his complexion dark. He wore a well-marked "corona" of dark hair, and in the centre of his splendid forehead were two small curls. His nose, widening downwards, had the true Roman curve; his lips were full, red, and a little parted, his cheek-bones rather prominent, and his eyes

greenish-yellow, not large, but opening wide under long and thin eye-lashes. His expression was mild and fatherly, and his hands were beautiful, with taper fingers, well adapted for using the pen.

One cannot even handle the great tomes in which his writings are enshrined and cursorily turn over their pages, without being struck by the thought of the labour and effort which must have been required to produce so much during a life so filled with work. The wonder and admiration are not diminished by the reflection that during a great part of the time he was harassed by illness and racked with pain. So great, at times, was his prostration, that he was unable to dictate, and found it impossible even to talk. He speaks in particular of two things—the pain of "gout" and the heat of fever; and he tells one of his friends that it was first one, then the other, and sometimes both together; so that "life was mere suffering." Yet he laboured on, till God called him to Himself.

The "Regula Pastoralis" was written after his accession to the supreme Pontificate; before the "Dialogues," and before the Register of his Epistles. But he tells us that its contents had long been taking shape in his mind; and we have a glimpse, here and there, in his earlier writings, of the process that was going on; as for example in the thirtieth chapter of the "Morals of Job," where he first indicates the subject of the third book of the "Regula,"—the mode of suiting admonition to the different varieties of temperament—and then says that he hopes, if God spares him, to dwell more at length upon it in a distinct treatise. Hence, when one of his friends, Bishop John, of Ravenna, ventured to remonstrate with him on his having in so marked a manner en-

deavoured to prevent himself from being elected Bishop of Rome, the holy doctor uses the opportunity to put upon paper "all his thoughts" on the pastoral office. The book was no sooner finished and sent to Ravenna than it began to be sought after. We find the Emperor Maurice eagerly reading it in a Greek version which he probably himself ordered to be made.* This Greek translation, it may be remarked, exists no longer. It seems to have been unknown as early as the ninth century, when Photius put together his *Bibliotheca*. It was not in the East that this great pastoral manual was to form minds and hearts, but in that West which owes its Christianity and its civilization so largely to St Gregory himself. We find it used in Church Councils as a text-book, and recommended by bishops and rulers as an indispensable rule of life. In the grand work of Christian organization undertaken by Charlemagne after his coronation as Roman emperor, no year is more remarkable than 813. In that year, at the emperor's wish, synods were held almost simultaneously in every part of the empire on this side of the Alps *super statu ecclesiarum corrigendo.* We have the records of five of them—those of Mayence, Rheims, Tours, Châlons, and St-Étienne. At Rheims, in order that the clergy and the monks might thoroughly understand the ecclesiastical law and their duty, long extracts were read, we are told, from the Holy Scripture, from the Rule of St Benedict, and from the "Regula Pastoralis" and the writings of the Fathers. A few days later the synod of Mayence assembled. Thirty bishops were present and twenty-five abbots. Three chambers, or houses, were formed. In the first were

* S. Greg. Ep. xii, 24.

gathered together the counts and justiciaries of the empire, who discussed the imperial law and the popular rights. In the second, the abbots and monks read the Rule of St Benedict, and consulted on the best means of advancing the cenobital life. In the third, the bishops, with their notaries, read and discussed the Gospels, the Epistles and the Acts, the sacred Canons, various writings of the Fathers, and the "Regula Pastoralis" of St Gregory*—in order "that there they might discover how best they could, by the grace of God, perfect and preserve the estate of the Church and the Christian people, by sound doctrine and examples of justice"—and "that so the pastors of the Church might understand how they ought to live, and how they should admonish their flocks." In the Council of Rheims, held about the same time, the third Canon prescribes that "no Bishop should be ignorant of the Canons, or of the 'Regula Pastoralis' of Blessed Pope Gregory." In that of Châlons, in the same year, it is decreed, in similar language, "that Bishops should know the book of St Gregory on the Pastoral Care, and should both live and preach according to the rules there laid down." And at the Council held in the chief town of the Empire, Aix-la-Chapelle, in 836, under the auspices of Louis le Debonnaire, son and successor of Charlemagne, we find six or seven of the canons expressed in the very words of the "Regula Pastoralis." It is evident that the fathers of this most important synod had the book before their eyes, and that when possible they copied into their Acts the identical words of St Gregory. When it is remembered that it was during these

* Hefele, *Conciles*, vol. v, p. 182.

early years of the ninth century, and under the vigorous initiative of sovereigns like Charlemagne and Louis, and of the prelates of the great metropolitan Sees of France and the Rhineland, that the complete ecclesiastical and civil system of the middle ages came into existence, it is clear that there was no single writing of any Father of the Church which has had such an influence upon the Western Church as St Gregory's "Regula." Thus we find by the testimony of Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims, whose busy and powerful career occupied the middle years of this century, that when a bishop was consecrated it was customary that he should kneel before the altar, and taking in his hands the book of the Sacred Canons "and the 'Regula Pastoralis,'" swear that he would "so live, so teach, and so judge" as was therein prescribed and set forth.

In England the "Regula Pastoralis" has a peculiar and most interesting history. It was translated into English in the ninth century—just after the date of the councils to which reference has been made—by no less a person than Alfred the Great. There are still existing, in the Bodleian and elsewhere, MSS. of this translation copied under the very eyes of Alfred himself. The hero's own preface deserves a few words of notice.* He says that it had very often come into his mind that there were formerly throughout England wise men, both of the sacred and secular order; and what happy times there were then throughout the country; and how her kings in those days obeyed God and His ministers; how they preserved peace and morality and order at home, and at the same time enlarged their terri-

* See "King Alfred's West-Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care," edited by Henry Sweet, 1871.

tory abroad; how they prospered both with war and wisdom; and also, the sacred orders, how zealous they were both in teaching and in learning and in the service of God; how foreigners came to this land in search of wisdom and instruction—and "that we now should have to go abroad for them!" So general, he says, was this decay that there were very few on this side of the Humber who could understand their rituals in English, or translate a letter from Latin into English; and he believed there were not many beyond the Humber; "so few there were," he continues, "that I do not remember any south of the Thames when I began to reign. It is God Almighty's grace that we have any teachers among us now!" "I remember," he goes on, "how I saw, before it had all been ravaged and burnt, how the churches throughout the whole of England stood filled with treasures and books, and there was also a great multitude of God's servants; but they had very little knowledge of the books, because they were not written in their own language. . . . And I wondered extremely that the good and wise men who were formerly all over England, and had perfectly learned all the books, did not wish to translate them into their own language." Thus he was induced, as he continues to explain, to conclude that it would be a good thing if certain books which were needed for all men to know were to be translated into English, and that all the English youth—if, he significantly adds, we have "stillness" (tranquillity) enough—that all the free English youths that are rich enough, be set to learn until they are well able to read English writing; and let those afterwards go on to Latin who are to continue learning, and to be promoted to higher

places. "So I began," he pursues, "among other various and manifold troubles of this kingdom, to translate into English the book that is called 'Pastoralis' in Latin, and 'Herd-book,' (or Shepherds' Book) in English, sometimes word by word, and sometimes according to the sense, as I had learnt it from Pregmund my Archbishop and Asser my Bishop and Grimbold my Mass-priest and John my Mass-priest. And I will send a copy to every bishopric in my kingdom. And on each there is a clasp worth fifty mancuses. And I command in God's name that no man take the clasp from the book, nor the book from the minster."

Here follow eight or ten lines of verse—King Alfred's own verse. It is in the nature of an *envoi* or send off, to the translation. It runs like this:

> This writing (or message) Augustine
> Over the salt sea brought
> From the South to the islanders,
> As the Lord's champion had decreed,
> The Pope of Rome, the wise Gregorius,
> Versed in doctrine, full of wondrous thoughts—
> Men in multitudes he gained to the divine guardian,
> Best of Romans, wisest of men, ever famous.
> Afterwards King Alfred translated
> Every word of me, and his scribes sent me South and North.

We see from this preface that the "Pastoralis Cura" was one of the books brought over by St Augustine himself; and it is therefore the book from which our first missionaries and bishops learnt the art of the care of souls. The pious king intended to send a copy to every bishop. There is, as we have seen, a MS. of the translation now in the Bodleian, written during Alfred's

own life-time, which has at the top of the first page this inscription in capital letters:

THIS BOOK SHALL TO WORCESTER

There is another in the British Museum, of which now unfortunately only a few charred fragments remain, which begins "Alfred, King, in love and friendship, sends his greeting to Hehstan"; and then comes a blank, as if the name of the person had been left to be filled in afterwards. In another MS. there is the name of Werferth, Bishop of Worcester, in another Bishop Hehstan, in another Bishop Wulfsig. If ever there was a book which formed the English speech and the pastoral views of the south and the east of England, it was this translation of the "message" of the great pope to whom England owes her faith. There can hardly be a more interesting study to those who aspire to bring back that faith to the country.

The celebrated treatise called, from its first words, the "Cura Pastoralis," and also from its subject and its use in the Church, the "Regula Pastoralis" is intended rather for pastors than Church students. It is, as its name implies, a hand-book for the instruction and spiritual profit of those who are called to the care of souls. The contents and arrangement are clearly described by St Gregory himself in the prologue. "I write down in this book," he says to his friend, Bishop John, "all my thoughts on the burden of the Pastoral Charge." *Omne quod penso*—the whole of my deliberate and well-considered views. His purpose in writing he declares to be this—that no man may look forward to that charge lightly, and that those who have too lightly taken it up, may come to dread and fear it. The tract is

divided into four books of very unequal extent. In the first book is considered what kind of men should aspire to the pastoral office; in the second, how the pastor should live and behave; in the third, how he should teach and direct souls, and in the fourth, which is extremely short, how the pastor, who lives as he should do and teaches wisely and well, should constantly "return upon himself" by humility, lest his very virtues prove his ruin.

The first book begins with the often-repeated saying which we owe to St Gregory, *Ars artium est regimen animarum*—"The cure of souls is the noblest of arts or professions." The holy doctor points out that no one would undertake an ordinary secular profession or a vocation without having studied it, practised it and learnt it. No man should aspire to the pastoral office who is "imperitus"—that is, he must be called by God, his motives must be pure and his learning sufficient. He must, moreover, be one who has advanced some way in perfection of life and stability of character. "No one," says St Gregory, "does more harm in the Church than a man who in name and by his order is holy, and yet leads a bad life."* The holy doctor goes on to speak in grave and eloquent language of the weight of pastoral responsibility and of the difficulty there is for a pastor to attend to his own soul. Unless he is more or less perfect when he takes up the work, he will never afterwards attain to the holiness without which a priest can never succeed. At the same time he points out that a man who really has the gifts and the preparation of the pastor, should not be deterred by false humility from accepting the

* Part i, ch 2.

charge. But he returns to the subject of ambition, and again insists that all who aspire to the pastoral office to gratify themselves, even when they are really desirous at the same time of doing good to souls, are guilty of grave fault and must fail in the work of God. The book concludes with two chapters in which he lays down, as in a summary, what a pastor must be, and must not be, when he assumes the care of souls.

The second book treats of him who is already a pastor, and lays down precepts for his good conduct and edifying life. First he must be "pure in thought," a phrase which does not precisely signify in St Gregory what it would mean to us, but rather single-minded or simple, that is, free from the three chief defiling stains, impurity, vanity and avarice. Next, he must show the best example to his people; he must preach by his action as much as by his words. This subject is enlarged upon with great eloquence and much beauty of scriptural illustration. Thirdly, he must know when to speak, and when to keep silence. Fourthly, he must unite active sympathy with internal recollection. Fifthly, he must know how to be kind to the good, and firm with those who require rebuke. This is a long chapter, in which are found wonderful sayings on the folly of haughtiness, and the duty of distinguishing between the sin and the sinner. Sixthly, external occupation must not diminish his solicitude for spiritual things; the care of temporals he must leave as much as possible to those who are not priests. The seventh point refers to the duty of making oneself liked by the flock—not for self-gratification but for the good of the flock itself. In the eighth place follows a long chapter on the method of correcting,

or passing over, the faults of the flock. The ninth and last head of admonition in this book is concerned with the pastor's obligation to keep up continually his reading and study of sacred learning.

Passing to the third book—which contains instructions how the pastor is to "teach"—*qualiter doceat*—we find that it consists of forty chapters. This book, indeed, constitutes by itself much more than half of the whole treatise. It is made up of a series of admonitions whose purpose it is to help the pastor to suit his teaching to the kind of person with whom he has to deal. He first gives a summary of the whole book. "Men," says St Gregory, "are to be admonished differently from women; the young from the old; the poor from the rich; the servant from the master; the prelate from the subject; the bold from the timid; the innocent from the corrupt"—and so on through some thirty-six pairs of antitheses each of which has a chapter to itself. This book was the principal manual of the pastoral direction of the Middle Ages. Its wise and pregnant philosophy, its beautiful zeal for souls, its wealth of scriptural illustration and its finished literary form have justly made it one of the classics of patristic tradition.

The Fourth Book is entitled: *How the preacher, all things being duly and well done, is to return to himself, lest either his own virtuous life or his preaching may lift him up.* It consists of a single chapter. A pastor returns to himself by the contemplation of his weakness and his many faults.

From this description, and from the work itself, which I trust all my readers will study carefully, it can be gathered that the "Cura Pastoralis" is a manual of moral and spiritual direction,

not of doctrinal instruction. It is intended both to urge the pastor to perfect his own soul, and to teach him how to look after the souls of his flock. It is a book of Christian theory brought to bear upon practical matters. The form is apothegmatical; that is, it delivers truth in finished and epigrammatic language—not descending to casuistry or going into working details, but throwing out fertile ideas which the intelligence of the reader may be trusted to develop for his own benefit. It is a precious manual of Christian philosophy, as clearly cut as it is solid and sound. A recent biographer of St Gregory* remarks that the "Regula Pastoralis" is one of those rare books which leave on the reader's mind an impression that never fades—a book to which the reader returns again and again—a book the first acquaintance with which forms an epoch in the reader's life. He feels that he is only expressing the voice of all ecclesiastical tradition when he says that no bishop should impose hands on any man who is unacquainted with the "Regula Pastoralis." And Kranzfelder, who published a German translation of the "Regula," with notes, in 1873, declares that not to become familiar at the fitting time with its solid thought, its wise counsel, its profound psychology, its delightful illustrations and its instructive handling of holy Scripture, is a loss that is well nigh irreparable.†

* Dom Celestine Wolfsgruber, of the Scottish Benedictines of Vienna, who in 1890 published a Life of the saint.

† See Dom Wolfsgruber's "Gregor der Grosse," p. 372.

NOTE.—Messrs Desclée, of Tournai, have published a neat duodecimo edition of the "Regula Pastoralis," edited by Father Micheletti, S.J. In 1874 Messrs Parker, of London, brought out the text, with a translation by the Rev. H. R. Bramley, opposite each page. This is well done, and forms a handy and useful manual for a student.

Attention may be also directed to a German translation of the holy Pope's treatise, with pious and practical commentary, by Dom Benedict Sauter, O.S.B., of the Abbey of Emaus, Prague: "Des hl. Papstes Gregorius des Grossen 'Pastoral Regel.'" Herder, Frieburg-im-Breisgau, 1904.)

The following Books are recommended:

Handbuch der Pastoral-Theologie. Von P. Ignaz Schuck, Kapitular der Benedictiner Stifter Kremsmunster. 9 Auflage. Innsbruck, Rauch, 1893.

Pastoral-Theologie. Durch Dr Joseph Amberger. 4 Auflage. Regensburg, New York, Cincinnati, F. Pustet, 1883. 3 vols.

Le Saint Prêtre. Par l'Abbé Dubois. Paris, Lecoffre, 1891.

Pratique du Zèle Ecclésiastique. Par le Même.

ST GREGORY THE GREAT*

Thy work, O Lord, in the midst of the years bring it to life.—*Hab.* iii, 2.

IF there are any men who may be said to do the work of God on this earth, it is natural that the Roman Pontiffs should be among the chief. If the great Catholic Church is Christ's witness, it will be the head of that Church, endowed as he is with divine prerogatives, who will chiefly steer the Church's course, sway the conflict of Christ's kingdom against that of the devil, contend against destructive errors, initiate great movements, and lend his name to the loyal soldiers who constantly fight for the great cause in every country and every generation.

There are some Popes who have done the work of the Lord more thoroughly and magnificently than others; have breasted more dangerous floods, laid deeper foundations, carried the name of Christ further, poured forth more powerfully the wisdom of the Holy Spirit. It is difficult to find, in the long list that follows St Peter, one name that seems to have done work more lasting and more essential, and done it with a more glorious manifestation of the heavenly spirit, than Pope St Gregory the Great, the thirteenth centenary of whose departure to heaven we are now happily celebrating. As we strain our eyes into the dim past, and try to reconstitute throughout those thirteen long centuries the personages that have followed one another, the deeds that resounded under heaven and are now silent in

* A Sermon preached in Westminster Cathedral at the centenary celebration, March 12, 1904.

written records, the good and the evil that have surged so high in their conflict, the strong places that have crumbled, the marks that have been obliterated, the constant upspringing of the new, the decay and the dissolution that strew the years with death—we are able, with a little reflection, to see how great a man he was who has left his impress upon all that space of human history.

When we behold Gregory, with his pale and suffering face, crowned as Pope in the old Basilica of the Prince of the Apostles, he seems to stand up amidst ruins. It is not so much that the palace of the Caesars is roofless and stripped, or that the Coliseum is abandoned to the owls and bats, or that the gates of Rome, her forums, and her palaces, all bear the marks of the violence of the barbarians; it is that the world-wide Roman Empire is weakened, and even prostrate, and ready to be dissolved. The empire had fought the kingdom of God; it had yielded, it had placed the cross on the brow of its Caesars, and for nearly three centuries the Church had grown and thriven under the law and the peace of Imperial Rome. The pillars of that law were now shaken, and the legions that kept that world-wide peace were dwindled and scattered. The centre of the empire was now upon the Bosphorus. Italy was broken up by the Lombard settlements. Beyond the Alps and round the shores of the Mediterranean new peoples were in motion, and new kingdoms in the throes of birth. And Gregory, entangled in the wreck of Rome, face to face with successive waves of barbarian attack, was the representative of the kingdom of Christ —that kingdom which would never die,—of the power of St Peter, that was only on the threshold of its glorious career.

We do not find that St Gregory the Great had any consciousness, or prophetic foreboding, that he was to be the founder and father of a Christendom far more Christian than the great Roman Empire. Rather he seems to expect the day of doom and the end of the world. There was hardly a time during the fourteen years of his pontificate when he was not "hemmed in by swords"—"death at the very doors."* He clings to the old order of things. He sends his dutiful greetings to the Byzantine Caesar, even at the very time that Caesar has left him to face the Lombard leader on the steps of St Peter's. When the exarchs and the dukes who tried to keep hold of fragments of a rapidly disappearing Italy, oppress him and slander him, he writes humbly, but with the freedom of a Christian bishop, to the imperial autocrat far away. And in all his ceaseless activity, in all his large, wide ruling of the Catholic Church, in all his creative and fertile organization, in all his minute and detailed solicitude, he is looking for the coming of the Day of Judgement. He finds the signs and the omens of it in the words of the Lord, in the anticipations of St Paul, in the visions of Ezechiel, in the distress of the nations, the changed aspect of the heavens, the earthquake and the tempest.

This is the man to whom England's glorious Christianity looks back as to its apostle; to whom the great Church of mediaeval Spain owes the foundations of her glories; who placed the hand of St Peter firmly on the young race that was surging round the ancient sees of Gaul. This is he who practically founded the temporal kingdom of the Popes, and who saved Rome for the days

* 2 Hom. in Ezec.

to come. This is he who planted the monks in the soil of Europe. This is the Pope who has left a storehouse of spiritual wisdom that has been used by every pastor and ruler ever since; whose "Regula Pastoralis" lay on the tables of the great synods of the early middle ages; whom strong organizing bishops like Honoratus of Autun saluted as the "organ of the Holy Spirit." It is this man whom, as the ages rolled on, a St Bernard studied, a St Thomas looked up to as his master, and a St Theresa revered as the oracle of the spiritual life; whose name was to be written in letters that would never perish on the whole of the liturgy of the Catholic Church.

What kind of a man was this? What was the soul, the mind, the heart that tenanted that frail body, and left such enduring marks on history; that wrought during a short life, during a short pontificate, so much that time has not been able to destroy; that seems still to be a living force in the world, forcing men to speak of him, and bringing them together as to-day before the Christian altar to praise and to thank God?

When the prophet sees in his visions of futurity the Redeemer that was to be given to Sion and to the Gentiles alike,* he beholds the mighty power of the most high God drawing from the depths of his quiver a "chosen arrow."† Christ was the chosen arrow. He it was that was to prove how the Lord had not forgotten Sion, to bring back Jacob, to carry light to the nations, to say unto Sion "Thy builders have come," and to bring in the multitudes of the races of the world to people the deserts and the desolate places of Israel. The Redeemer came, and the world saw Him, and He passed away. No one can say that

* Isa. xlix. † Ibid. 2.

He did not carry out His work. Although there were, and are still, wide empty spaces where the kingdom of God should throng in joyful multitudes, yet He did His work perfectly. That is, He reaches from end to end. The work was to be the work of a great cycle—the great cycle of the Christian dispensation. The visible life of Christ was not the length and breadth and width either of Christ's kingdom or of His work. He laid the foundations, He planted the corner-stones, He accumulated the treasure of gold and silver that all that gigantic work was to cost. Whoever was to work in the coming years, from the apostles even unto the consummation, was to draw breath and vitality, insight, muscle and staunchness from Him and Him alone. He had withdrawn from sight, but all the same He was ever present to the ceaseless toil, although in a different way. And no man of all those who were to be employed in His endless work but must be formed upon His likeness. The forty-ninth chapter of Isaias is a prophetic picture of the men who were to be the fellow-workers of Christ as long as the world lasts.

For many months and years Gregory lay hidden in the quiver of God. That is the invariable condition of the preparation of those who are to co-operate in redemption. The hidden life must come before the "three years"; the trial in the wilderness before the preaching; the desert with its silence before the manifestation. From a rich and influential citizen, Gregory by voluntary renunciation passed into the condition of a cloistered and contemplative man, his wealth all disposed of, his personal condition that of an ascetic, a learner, a novice, a monk. We

read of him that from his very youth he had always served and sought God. But we gather that his generous, lofty and devout nature had experienced the promptings of renunciation for some time before he actually renounced. In this he blamed himself: "Long and long did I put off," he says. Yet even when he was a rich man of this world, clad with the trabea, borne in his litter through the Roman ways, we may well think of him as one of those of whom it is said in Job, "They make solitudes unto themselves." It would appear that he resisted this impulse of renunciation because it seemed to him that he would be doing more good if he remained in the world. It was a natural temptation to such a man, in such a position, at such a time. But he could not foresee. He was to do something indefinitely greater for the world than he could even suspect in those early days; he was to work in a higher plane, on higher principles, to struggle with far more vital issues. But to do this he must first bury himself in the quiver of God.

He describes his ascetic and monastic life over and over again in the days when he had been compelled to leave it off. He uses two words especially—one is *Quies*, or peace, and the other *Contemplatio*. He speaks of *alta gaudia quietis meæ*—the "deep joy of my tranquillity"; he remembers *altum culmen quietis meæ*—"the lofty heights of my restful peace"; he looks back on the times when his "contemplation" was as keen as the edge of a knife—*acies contemplationis meæ*. The truth is, in those years he gathered his strength. There is no achievement in Christ's work, unless there is union with Christ—that union of heart,

soul and impulse which carries with it the grand condition of efficacious work—the outpouring on the man of the spirit of God. In that quiet time a saint passes slowly into union. In that quiet time the supernal outpouring ceases not—now slow, as in precious drops of that mystic oil to which it is so often compared in the Prophets, now more full and steady, as that *fluminis impetus*, that river-like rush, which brings to the city of God—the soul—the mysterious joys of transformation. During those hidden years, the power of the Lord from on high fills by degrees every space and fold of the saint's nature, expelling the leaven of sin, occupying the springs of purpose and resolution, and impregnating the frail humanity with the fragrance and force of that spirit which was borne upon the waters, which blew on the Red Sea, which came upon Samson, which rested on the sacred humanity of Jesus, and which filled the whole world.

Of this divine transformation every feature is described in St Gregory's own words. He tells us how he "fled from everything"; how all "transitory things came to be far beneath him"; how he seemed to be "out of the world," "out of the flesh," so that the words of the prophet were fulfilled, "I will lift thee up above the heights of the world." He lived for eternity; all his sighing was for that dear country, that *patria*, to which he looked forward, for that God, whose countenance he sought as the days went by, wishing for nothing, fearing nothing, awaiting the friendly call of death. All these words and expressions are his own. When he had gone through that time of detachment, that time of self-annihilation, that time of union, then he was prepared for the work of the Lord.

That work, wide and strenuous as it was, need not be minutely described when we recite his panegyric; because it is not the work that matters; it is the spirit of the Lord. Yet as we survey it—as we think of his 800 extant letters, of his dealings with the empire, his struggle in Italy, his administration of the Patrimony of St Peter, his pastoral solicitude for bishops, his care for monasticism in the west and in the east, his English apostolate, his fatherly insistence with half-civilized kings and queens, his ample writings on holy Scripture, on religion and on the pastoral charge, and his monumental labour on the chant and liturgy—we seem to realize the type of the man of God who works for God. True, it is God who makes that work fruitful, because it is done by His own holy and strong spirit. But the soul—the nature, which is the divine instrument—do you think it possible that in that nature—in that human personality—there should not be a nobility, a truth, a glory, which is the very effect of its being taken up by its divine Master for so high a purpose? That deep and noble endowment of human nature is described by the scriptural word "Patience." It is St James, in an Epistle that is full of striking generalizations, who stamps on that ancient word of Jew and Greek its special Christian meaning. At the end of his exhortation, he sums up a man's life: "Be patient, then, my brethren, until the coming of the Lord."* "Be you patient and strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand."† And at the beginning of his Epistle he had this in his mind; for he said that the Christian faith implied patience, and "Patience hath a perfect work."‡ This large sense

* Jas v, 7. † Jas v, 8. ‡ Jas i, 4.

of patience is the corollary of the scriptural word, the word of the Creed, the word of the Incarnation, *Passus est.* For Christian patience is the outward manifestation of love; *Charitas est patiens.* It is the acceptance of the lifelong fight for Christ; it is the stubborn set of the human will against passion and sensuality; it is the resisting power of nature (by grace) against the world and the demon; it is the unwearying, ceaseless, cheerful, joyful handling of all the labour, mental and bodily, and all the pressure, and all the pain, which accompany man's march along the dusty high-way of life, on the rocky climb of endeavour, down the rough descent towards the grave. Gregory was great because he was patient. He faced all the work, all the pressure, all the suffering. Call up the picture of that devoted, steadfast shepherd of God's flock. He stands there at his post. His faculties and his time belong not to him but to his awful charge. He must instruct, command, exhort, entreat—to-day, to-morrow, as yesterday. He must draw good men around him. He must check and prevent the wicked. He must have his eye upon things near, and also on things afar, even to the dim horizon of the known world. He must be ready for the pangs of mistrust, of calumny and of failure. There is no cessation, no hope of rest, until the hour strikes when, like his Master, he must die.

These are the two characteristics that I seem to read in the life and history of this greatest of the Popes: his most marked ascetical and unitive preparation, and his untiring labour and wide, comprehensive patience. We read there one other lesson. St Gregory knew well what was the value and the permanence of his work.

Although there is no sign that he foresaw the glorious Christendom of which he was one of the chief founders, and although he seemed to look for the speedy ruin of the visible order and the destruction of the world, yet he knew, in the way the saints know it, that his work was solid, because it was God's work. He did not anxiously forecast the future; he did not count the leagues of this world's land and sea that his labour affected. The solidity of God's work is independent of space and of time. Were time hastening to its last stroke, were the fire already smouldering that was to consume the earth and the heavens—yet a good man's prayer, a spiritual man's act, whatever God gives the grace to do, must and will help to build up that kingdom of God, that heavenly Jerusalem, which is above, which is our mother, which will last for all eternity. St Gregory had all this large hope and firm confidence. There is a notable passage in his "Morals on Job," where he sees in God's heaven the "shining stars of the Pleiades,"* the shining stars of hope, and recalls the names of the mighty workers of God's work who in the past have laboured, and ever live to fill men with hope; how the innocence of Abel, the singleness of Enoch, the patience of Noe, the obedience of Abraham, the purity of Isaac, the labours of Jacob, the persecutions of Joseph, the meekness of Moses, the trust of Josue and the endurance of Job, like so many bright stars, help men to journey on with sure feet in the darkness and in the night.

The results and the glories which St Gregory never foresaw, we can look back upon. For us,

* xxxviii, 31.

that great life, that many-sided soul, which we seem to know so well, is the motive of our thanksgiving and of our hope. The Christendom that St Gregory made is the ideal of the believer in Christ's kingdom on earth. True, at no moment of all the past thirteen centuries was that ideal perfect and complete. There was always—as there must be—the shortcomings and the failures caused by the vices of the wicked and the imperfections of the good. The kingdom of God on earth at the best will never be more than an approach, an approximation, to what was in Gregory's mind when he was writing his letters from the Lateran. How does Christendom seem to him now—now that he has watched so long from the heavens over the work of the Lord that he did on earth? May we not be sure that he exercises a powerful intercession—an intercession which, as in the case of every Pontiff, is even official? The Church can never rest till she is pure within and free and triumphant without. For this, the spirit of God is always contending; this is God's work. May the example of St Gregory the Great set every heart on fire to join in that work in these days in which we live; and may his intercession, which here in England we claim with the confidence of his own children, give a new life, in the midst of these long and chequered years, to the cause of the Sovereign Pontiff, of the Christianity of nations, and the holy Catholic Church.

THE MONASTICISM OF ST GREGORY THE GREAT*

And I said, Who will give me the wings of a dove, and I will fly away and be at rest? Behold, I have fled far away, and I have remained in solitude. I waited for Him who raised me from pusillanimity of spirit and from the tempest.—*Ps.* liv, 6, 7, 8.

THE great achievements of the great Pope whose accession to the Chair of St Peter we commemorate has been recounted, or will be recounted by other voices. My task is to find out the secret of his life. Looking back on that life of sixty-four years, at the end of the sixth century, we see that it was then that Christian Rome was founded, and that Christian Europe began to take shape. We see that the holy Roman Church began then to set herself on the level of the thrones and the principalities of the world; that the Gospel went out from her to new races and distant peoples; and that ancient and worn-out civilizations once for all failed to bury in their ruins that strong and living power which had taken its seat upon the tomb of the apostles. We see that these things happened in a time of savage war, of pestilence and of famine; at a time when the deserted streets and the empty and ruined palaces of imperial Rome were signs of the agonizing dissolution of the widest and most mighty empire the world had ever seen. It was a time when men were rather thinking of their life and existence, of the fate of their wives and children, than of regenerating a continent

* A sermon preached at Downside, September 1, 1890.

or inaugurating an epoch. It is admitted by all alike—by unbelieving historians and by ecclesiastical annalists, by secular critics and by the writers of saints' lives—that the man to whom these results were chiefly owing was Pope St Gregory the Great.

It is well that we should remember that no saint is a merely passive or mechanical minister in those things which he does for the kingdom of God. The Almighty may use, for His divine purposes, inanimate or irrational things: or He may use men whose hearts are turned away from Him—a Cyrus, an Antiochus, a Caiaphas. Such instruments He guides; but He does not fill them with His spirit. But the saints He not only guides but fills with that same divine Spirit of which it is said that it filled the Son of God Himself when He was sent "to judge and to reprove, and to strike the earth with the rod of His mouth.* For of His fullness they receive. And although everything they do is to be ascribed finally and completely to the mighty hand of God, yet it is also most true that the saints themselves, by their will and reason, by their words and their acts, to which supernatural power is given by the Spirit which lives and works within them, are the real ministers and agents of the wonderful things which we behold as the result of their careers.

The secret of the power of St Gregory is summed up in his monasticism. For, although so many of the saints have not been monks, yet when we find a saint who is a monk, his monasticism is his power. For his power is his union with God and his likeness to Christ; and monasticism is the form which this blessed union and

* Isa. xi, 4.

this holy likeness takes in those who have the grace to profess it. For to be a monk means to leave as far as possible one's worldly environment, in order to adhere more closely in mind, spirit and heart to God.

It is not to be wondered at that St Gregory, when He had determined to give himself wholly to God, should have chosen the monastic life. In those times of war and of trouble a monastic community was the most stable and safe of all associations of men. In Rome the clergy and the nobles were nominally rich, yet were often the victims of pillage, and even liable to poverty and destitution. As for the people, want, starvation and suffering abounded on every side. To employ one's wealth in founding monasteries meant to use it in setting up communities whose labour made them self-sufficing, whose comparative poverty protected them from rapine, and whose unselfishness made them the helpers of the poor and suffering, and the organizers of labour. To escape from the mockery of worldliness in the wretched world into which he was born, St Gregory threw himself into monasticism. He was noble and rich. How long his riches would be his, with the country in a state of anarchy and the Lombard at the gates of Rome, no one could tell. Therefore, having founded six monastic houses in Sicily, he finally turned into a monastery his own palace on the Cœlian hill, and there received a monastic habit and tonsure, and lived under the obedience of an abbot.

In order to study the heart of this great monk, we have to wait till he leaves his cloister behind. I need not relate how he had hardly put on the habit of a monk, when he was called out of

his peaceful solitude by the voice of the Sovereign Pontiff; how he was sent on an embassy to Constantinople; and how at length he was forced himself to accept the papacy. It is to this defeat of his purposes—this frustration of what he most dearly longed for—that we owe such a picture of the monastic spirit as has rarely been given to the world. To the eyes of the Divine Providence monasticism is only a means to an end. Gregory, in his lowliness of heart, thought that because he was torn from the cloister he was torn from union with God; but God, who had thus disposed, knew that he carried with him beyond seas, and into palaces, and to the throne of St Peter itself, all that the holiest rule and the most silent of cloistral solitudes could give to the spirit of a saint.

The heart of St Gregory turned to the monastic state long before he was able to leave the world. He was born A.D. 540—three years before the death of St Benedict. Monte Cassino was well known in Rome among the families of the nobles, who, amid the crash of the empire, held together something of ancient Roman greatness. As St Paul the Deacon says: "In the years of his youth, when the young are wont to begin to indulge in worldly vice, he began to give himself to God, and to sigh with extreme ardour for heaven and for supernatural things"; *ad supernae vitae patriam toto desiderio anhelare*—words taken textually from St Gregory himself. It must have been when he was barely twenty that he began to be familiar with blessed Constantine, the disciple of St Benedict, and his successor as abbot of Monte Cassino, for Constantine seems to have died in 560. We learn from himself also that he had frequently con-

versed on the life of St Benedict with Valentinian, who for many years was abbot of the Benedictine monastery which flourished under the very shadow of St John Lateran; with Simplicius, third abbot of Monte Cassino; and with Honorius, abbot of Subiaco. As a young man, then, among the richest of Rome, he was familiar with monks, and with the life of St Benedict. He tells us himself that he delayed in following the attraction of his heart. "Long and long did I put off the grace of conversion. I kept to the secular habit long after I was inspired with the heavenly desire." These are the terms in which, in a letter to St Leander of Seville,* he speaks of the monastic life. "I was beginning to see," he continues, "even then, what I should seek in order to make my eternity secure." But custom, and the many things which began to be laid upon him to do, and the wish to be useful to others, kept him back—in garb a patrician, in heart a monk. "At length," he goes on, "at length, in real earnest, I fled from everything, and took refuge in the haven of the monastery." That the monastic life was a port or haven of safety is a thought which constantly recurs in his writings; suggested, it may be, by that long and troublesome sea voyage which formed part of his journey to Constantinople, the first of his great employments. It was in this spirit that St Gregory changed the silken garments, and the ornaments of gold and silver, of which his biographers speak, for the penitential habit; and his tonsured head bespoke his profession. He prayed and wrote in a cell of that monastery on the Cœlian hill which had been his own house—the monastery which many of us know so well, and which

* *Epistola ad S. Leandrum*, cap. i.

in these days will be visited by so many devout pilgrims.

There is no difficulty in finding out St Gregory's own view of the monastic life. It recurs over and over again in his writings. He looked upon monasticism as the grand means for enabling the heart of a man to rest without disturbance in the view of his God and of his last end. In his letters and elsewhere he constantly uses the phrases *alta gaudia quietis meæ*—"the deep joys of my rest"; and *altum culmen quietis meæ*—"the lofty summit of my rest." These expressions are found, for example, in the fifth and sixth epistles of the first book, written at moments when, amid the distractions of pastoral work, he was looking back to his life as a monk. In another letter he says, still speaking of his exterior work and comparing it with former days: "The mind loses its erectness, and is deprived of the keenness of its contemplation"—*acies contemplationis*.* The metaphor suggests that in the quiet cell the mind of man is upright and looks unceasingly to heaven, but that in the world it is bowed down and bent to the earth. "Man hath bowed himself down and hath been debased." † *Quies* and *contemplatio*, then, are the two words which he uses to describe the life of the monk. To these leading ideas he gives in several places a more detailed expression. In the preface to the "Dialogues" he says: "My uneasy heart, wounded and sore with external occupation, remembers what it used to be in the monastery; how all transitory things were far beneath it; how it soared above all that happens on this earth; how its thought was of nothing but things heavenly; how even whilst yet shut

* Ep. vii. † Isa. ii, 9.

up in the body, it passed by contemplation beyond the confines of the flesh; how even death, which almost all men dread as a punishment, was looked forward to with love as the entrance to life and the reward of labour." This was St Gregory in his monastery. And it is touching to remember the circumstances under which those words were written. "On a certain day," he says—it would be about 594, four years after his accession to the papacy—"on a certain day, being exceedingly depressed by troubles from certain seculars, to whom in their affairs we are often called to give what it is certain we do not owe, I betook myself to a certain place where I could indulge my sadness." There is no doubt that this was somewhere in Rome; and Mabillon, on the strength of an inscription which he has published in the "Analecta," considers it certain that the place referred to was the monastery of St Andrew itself. "There," he continues, "when I was sitting in deep melancholy, and had been long silent, my dear son Peter came to me; he had been my intimate friend from his youth, and was my companion in my studies in holy Scripture." Peter the Deacon, who was St Gregory's interlocutor in these renowned Dialogues, is often mentioned in the letters of the holy Pope, and indeed many are addressed to him. But his introduction and presence here remind us of a significant circumstance in connection with the monasticism and the sanctity of the great Pontiff. Peter the Deacon was a monk of St Andrew's Monastery. He was one of that devout and learned body of men with whom St Gregory surrounded himself in the apostolic palace. For before his time it had been the custom of the Popes to employ about their person young laymen. St Gre-

gory abolished this. Nay, he condemned it afterwards in a synod held in the holy city. Instead of these secular chamberlains, he selected certain "most prudent clerics," and "most holy monks," as we are told by his biographer, to be his counsellors and to constitute his *familia* or household. Among these monks are mentioned several who afterwards occupied great positions in the Church—Marinian, of St Andrew's, who became Metropolitan of Ravenna; Proteus, whom by a special revelation he suddenly created Abbot and despatched to found a monastery and hospital in Jerusalem, "where thus," as Montalembert says, "the rule of St Benedict established itself among the children of St Basil to await the coming of the Crusaders"*; and, to us not least, Augustine the prior of St Andrew's, and Mellitus, who were sent to the conversion of England. With these friends and servants St Gregory lived day and night. We are expressly told by one who had access to authoritative information that they were seen constantly by his side; that there was *vita communis* or common-life in each community of clerics and monks; and that the Roman Church resembled the life of the early Christians as described by St Luke, and that of the Church of Alexandria under St Mark, as we find in the pages of "Philo-Judaeus." Thus, as the biographer sums up, in the apostolic palace there was "all the observance of a monastery," whilst in the Church there was that learning and that splendour which were worthy of the Roman See.

It was one of these beloved and saintly friends who came to the holy Pope as he sat sad and silent in his retirement at St Andrew's. The very words which passed between them are given; and

* *Monks of the West* (authorized translation), vol. II, p. 163.

all who know St Gregory's scrupulous historical instinct will accept them as having been really spoken. Peter asked affectionately: "Has any fresh thing happened to thee, that thou art more melancholy than usual?" "My sadness," replied St Gregory, "is both old and fresh; old because I have it always, fresh because it is always growing." And then he gave vent to his regrets for his monastic *quies* as already related. "Now," he continues, "the *pulchra quietis meæ species*—'the fair face of my monastic rest' is defiled by the dust of earthly activity." And then, reverting to a favourite illustration, drawn from the sea and its perils, he mourns his distractions. He goes on to say that it increases his suffering to recall to mind the lives of certain holy persons who have left the world "with their whole mind"; men to whom almighty God has granted entire freedom from worldly work. Peter expresses his astonishment that there are in Italy many men of such sanctity as to cause such thoughts in the Pontiff's mind; and the latter, replying that the narrations he could give of such holy personages would be long and interesting, Peter begs him to speak of them; and then is begun that series of "Dialogues" in four books, of which the second contains the life of St Benedict. Thus the "Dialogues" are a record of the monastic aspirations of the holy doctor. And it is worthy of remark that our own Venerable Bede, when drawing a picture, in the History, of him whom he calls the Apostle of the English, makes use of this very passage from the preface to the "Dialogues." He points out how, as he says, whilst sovereign Pontiff, he made his palace a monastery; how he carried monks with him on his journey to Constantinople, in order that "regular obser-

vance" might be carried on—*in tutamentum observantiæ regularis:* and how, in spite of the saint's words of humility, we cannot for a moment suppose that with all his pastoral solicitude he lost one degree of monastic perfection. These words of the great English doctor are remarkable, because they were written before the longer life of St Gregory by John the Deacon had been composed; Venerable Bede must have heard what the immediate disciples of St Augustine had to relate to his own informant about the glorious Pope who had sent them to the English shores.*

There is another passage of St Gregory which so eloquently expresses his ideal of the monastic state that it must be quoted. For we must remember that when he describes his ideal, he describes himself. We shall see that the pure and clear vision of God and of his soul's last end is still his principal thought. And it may be possible here to notice a splendid but well-marked difference between his language and that of earlier monks, in his making this restful contemplation the chief end of the religious vocation. The older monks, as we see especially in St John Climacus, looked rather to penance than to contemplation. To the oriental mind, sin was ingrained in man—as indeed it is, in the sense that proneness to sin is a part of our fallen nature; and darkness and solitude, austerities and silence, were to them its only expiation and its only cure. Not that the saints of the desert were indiscreet; if they had been, they would not have been saints. But, as we read in Cassian, the great leaders of the heroism of the desert were forced, in order to prevent austerity from degenerating into fanati-

* *Historia Ecclesiastica,* Lib. II, cap. 1.

cism, to lay the most marked stress on discretion; going so far as to call it the chief of all the virtues. It is this virtue of holy discretion which St Gregory himself singles out when he praises the Rule of St Benedict—*discretione præcipuam.** The view that the monastery was a refuge from gross sin and a place of expiation was one which naturally prevailed in Alexandria, in Antioch, where life was luxurious and thoroughly pagan. But it was not a view which adequately expressed monasticism; it was not one which sufficed for a man who lived in the midst of plague, famine and war; and, above all, it was not a view which would have built up the monastic cloisters of Christian Europe. Life was not all a struggle with demons and with deadly sin; there was a possibility of perfection; even to the poor and weak soul of man there was a prospect of union with God. To St Benedict the monastery was a school of God's service; to St Gregory it was the home of contemplation. Writing to Theoctista, the sister of the Emperor Maurice, he says of his monastic days: "I tried each day to become out of the world, out of the flesh; to drive from my mental sight all the phantasms of the body, and to look upon heavenly joys without corporeal aid. Uttering sighs towards the sight of God, and not sighing only, but longing with the very marrow of my interior, I said: 'My heart hath said to Thee, I have sought Thy countenance; Thy face, O Lord, will I seek.' Wishing for nothing, and fearing nothing in this world, I seemed to stand as it were on the top of all things, so that the words of the prophet seemed to be fulfilled: 'I will lift thee up above the heights of the world.' . . . I

* *Dialogorum* lib. II, cap. 36.

loved the beauty of the contemplative life, as Jacob the beauty of Rachel; its *quies* may beget less, but it sees more light. Lia is *minus videns, amplius patiens*, she sees less and suffers more. With Mary I hastened to sit at the feet of the Lord, to take in the words of His mouth. The legion of devils having been, as I thought, driven forth, I wished to forget all whom I knew, and to rest at the feet of my Saviour." *

There is only one further reference to his writings which there is time here to make. It is to that magnificent Encyclical on the Pastoral Office † which he addressed to the four Patriarchs of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem. In that letter there is a paragraph which at once paints him to the life and describes the secret of his sanctity. He compares in a pastor two qualities—compassion and contemplation—meaning by compassion that interest in the affairs of the flock which a bishop is bound to have. The pastor, he says, must be at every one's call by compassion, yet rapt beyond all in contemplation; kind and considerate to every one, yet ascending even above himself by the loftiness of his gazing and the vehemence of his desire of the invisible. Illustrating his thought by the vision of holy Jacob, he says that the preachers of the Church ought at the same time to contemplate the Head of the Church who leaneth on the top of the ladder, and to descend to the members of the Church, figured by the anointed stone at its foot. Like Moses, again, he must go in and out of the tabernacle: inside, rapt into contemplation; outside, at the service of all who need him. Within, he ponders the hidden things of God; without, he bears the burthen of things earthly.

* Fifth Epistle of the First Book. † Ep. 26, Bk I.

Thus our divine Master Himself works miracles in the cities, but gives Himself to prayer on the mountain side; by this teaching all pastors that the highest contemplation is to be united with the most compassionate labour for others; for that charity ascendeth to lofty things most admirably, when it also descendeth most mercifully to men's necessities; and is truest in kindness to others, when it is most energetic in its recourse to its Creator.

If there is repetition in these extracts from the words of the great servant of God, whom we are devoutly commemorating, it is a repetition which is his own. Nay, I have shortened and condensed his sentences. The spirit of St Gregory is the spirit of contemplation. The thought of his eternity and of his God made him a saint; that thought drove him from the world; that thought stripped him of all his wealth and dignities; that thought filled his heart in his silent cell. And it was that thought also which built a cloister round him in his journeyings by sea and land; in his sojourning in imperial Byzantium; in his apostolic palace at Rome. That thought united his soul to God, and gave him that likeness to Christ which is the secret of all power for the kingdom of God. That thought, therefore, wrought the conversion of nations, built up the holy Roman Church, purified the house of God, and dictated those writings at once so fatherly and so deep, so direct and yet so polished, which all through the middle ages were the delight of Christendom, and which at all times have been the instruction of pastors and the treasure of the Catholic Church.

I know not if any stones yet remain of the palace which he made a monastery on the Cœ-

lian hill; probably there do remain some of these very stones. But whether or not, the pilgrim who this day is privileged to stand on that spot knows that he is standing on holy ground. He is standing where a saint was made. He is standing where the Holy Spirit descended and filled the heart of a doctor of the Church. He is standing where, like some beneficent tempest, the clouds of grace and inspiration gathered, whence was to go out the voice of the Lord, breaking the cedars, calling out the floods, revealing things hidden, and making itself felt to the very ends of the world.

The material stones are of little import. But the spiritual work wrought there has an interest that can never die. There he was clothed in the habit; there he said, with arms uplifted, *Suscipe me Domine secundum verbum tuum et vivam.** For it is certain that he followed in all its main features the rule of St Benedict. It was with Benedictines of Monte Cassino that he had been familiar from his youth. It was the Benedictine rule which he called, by excellence, *Regula Monachorum*. It was to St Benedict's life he dedicated one whole book of the "Dialogues." The words of the great Patriarch are constantly in his mouth. The technical phrases of the Benedictine cloister, such as *Congregatio* for community, and *Opus Dei* for the divine office, and many others, are familiar to him. He uses quaint Benedictine phrases, such as *Quia omnino non expedit animabus eorum.*† And it is certain that he decreed the Benedictine observance throughout the whole of Italy. It is interesting to observe that the main foundation of the view of Cardinal Baronius, that Valentio,

* *Reg. S. Benedicti*, cap. lviii. † *Reg. S. Benedicti*, cap. lxvi.

or Valentine, was the first Abbot of St Andrew's, and that he was a disciple of St Equitius, has, as Cardinal Pitra* points out, been entirely removed by the discovery, noted in Ewald's lately-edited "Regesta," of an ancient diploma, which names Maximus as the first Abbot of that monastery.

Thus, beyond all possibility of further discussion, St Gregory the Great takes his place as a member of the family of St Benedict; and with St Gregory come St Augustine and the apostles of the English race. That they belonged to "his own monastery" he emphatically and even fondly states, and on more than one occasion. And he would have them, in their missionary and pastoral labours, still live the life of monks. We have here again his own words. St Augustine at the beginning of his work in England had asked the holy Pope questions about the stipends and sustentation of clerics. St Gregory's reply forms the institution by the Holy See of cathedral monasteries. He said: "You, my brother, have been brought up under monastic rule: therefore you ought to live in common with your clerics in the Church of the English; and you ought to establish the mode of life which our fathers observed in the days of the rising Church, when no one called anything his own." †

There had been bishops before who had lived with their clergy in common life and monastic poverty. But now for the first time had the Roman Pontiff sanctioned and ordained that, throughout a new province, wherever it was possible, the bishop and his chapter should be monks. I have found what seems to be an interesting confirmation of the fact that St Augus-

* *Analecta Novissima*, 1885.
† Ven. Beda, *Hist. Eccl.*, lib. I, cap. xxvii.

tine looked up to St Benedict as his monastic father. If the Charter,* dated A.D. 605, and ascribed to Ethelbert, of Kent, by which certain possessions are given to the monastery of SS. Peter and Paul (afterwards St Augustine's) at Canterbury, is genuine, it was undoubtedly written by St Augustine himself, whose name is among the signatories. In this charter there are at least two unmistakable citations from the rule of St Benedict, that is, from Chap. iii and Chap. liv.

Twice afterwards—perhaps three times—before the time of Lanfranc, did the Holy See renew the sanction of cathedral monasteries, and dedicate afresh the English Benedictines to parochial work. When Boniface IV wrote to King Ethelbert; when Pope Vitalian sent Archbishop Theodore; when St Wilfrid returned from Rome in possession of the "mind" of the Holy See; and when those three great men, Ethelwold of Winchester, Oswald of Worcester and Dunstan of Canterbury, by the same authority, purified and reformed the English Church; at each of these periods the original ordination of St Gregory was renewed, either expressly or virtually, by one or other of his successors. And when the great missionary monasteries of the north conformed to Benedictine observance, there was completed throughout the land that circle of monastic cathedrals which extended from Durham to Peterborough, from Peterborough to metropolitan Canterbury and royal Winchester, and from Winchester to where Worcester stood as a queen among the Benedictine houses of the Severn Valley.

For the lesson to be learnt from the life of our

* Given without question in Birch's *Cartularium Saxonicum*.

apostle, our patron and our master, is that the cloister is the secret of strength, and that the missionary and the pastor who would be strong must carry his cloister with him wherever he goes. There are times—and there have always been times—when a monk can find many things to do for God outside his monastery. But if he would win souls and build up Catholicism, St Gregory tells him he must learn first what his monastery alone can teach him. Why is so much good work barren, so much hard work fruitless? It is true that results only come in God's own time, and that many true servants of God may now be painfully sowing and planting what will be a glorious harvest when they are forgotten. If it is to be so, and if the kingdom of God is to be enlarged, then the secret of St Gregory must be learnt during days and years of discipline and meditation. There is no philosophy so lofty, so wide, so peaceful as this which breathes in the utterances of one whom English Benedictines may truly call their founder. The pettiness, the vanities, the selfishness of human nature, which spoil our work for God—these the great doctor shows us as it were burnt up, annihilated, by that inpouring of spiritual light which the contemplation of God brings to the soul. The world is mean and narrow; time is despicable; money and pleasure are beneath contempt to one who lives near the face of God. It is striking to reflect with what keen understanding the illuminated soul of St Gregory relates that wondrous vision of St Benedict in which he saw from a room in Monte Cassino the vast extent of the valley before him suddenly widen into the vision of the universal world.* His comment is characteristic

* *Dialogorum* lib. II, cap. xxxv.

of the Gregory of contemplation. The soul is "enlarged," he says, by the sight of God. *Videnti Creatorem angusta est creatura;* to him who looks on the Creator, narrow, narrow is all that is created. Narrow indeed! What was the Roman emperor, what was the fierce Lombard, what was the ocean, what were earth and space, to the man who sat near the tomb of St Peter and had his spirit and heart filled with the communication of the mighty spirit of the Lord of heaven and earth? And that strange time, with its trouble and horror, when the Pontiff himself would break off his sermon because the barbarian was at the very gates of Rome—that terrible time when St Gregory thought the last days were near—it seems, in his writings, to have been almost a time of peace. He lives and acts as if there was nothing to disturb him. He weeps for his lost *quies*—but it is his humility which prompts his tears. He shows he is solidly at peace. It is not so much that, by some miracle, the Lombard never entered Rome whilst he was Pope. But it is that his heart is steady, his vision is clear, his will is with his God. Therefore he writes, commands, rebukes, reforms; deals with the basest of emperors and the fiercest of barbarians; hopes for the heretic, hopes for the heathen, hopes for the Lombard; breaks out into "Glory to God in the highest!" when he hears from St Augustine in Kent; and displays in his familiar letters a sweet and outpoured tenderness such as might remind us of St Francis de Sales.

The days and the centuries have passed away, and it is 1,300 years since he was consecrated to the Papacy. During that time his name has been a beacon to all generations. Let not us neglect to study the power of that name and life. Once

an apostle, always an apostle; once a father, always a father; once a founder, always a founder. And therefore all of us in England, and with greater reason all English Benedictines, and with greatest reason all the sons of this monastery of his own, may trust that as they praise God for his great career, and celebrate his festival by prayer, by the word of God, by that liturgy and by those chants which have come to us from him, so they may feel his intercession, may learn something of his secret, and may be taught how to live and to work, in quiet and in the peace which the world cannot give, for God, and for God alone.

LEX LEVITARUM

CHAPTER I

Vocation

THE first chapter of the first book of the "Regula Pastoralis" begins with these words: "Nulla ars doceri praesumitur, nisi intentâ prius meditatione discatur. Ab imperitis ergo pastorale magisterium quâ temeritate suscipitur, quando ars est artium regimen animarum!"

To St Gregory the care of souls is the greatest of all arts. In words which he borrows from St Gregory Nazianzen, and which a thousand writers after him have placed at the head of their pastoral treatises, he expresses his profound conviction that to rule and guide souls a man must be *an expert.* Any one who should take up such a task without the requisite skill and training would be inexcusably rash. Observe the word that he uses to express the state of unpreparedness; it is *imperitia*—the being unskilled. This word occurs over and over again in this first chapter. He says it is this *imperitia* which our Lord blames in those words of the Prophet Isaias, "The shepherds themselves were without understanding," * and again in that passage of Jeremias, "They that had the law knew Me not." † So that it means a certain want of understanding, of light and of knowledge. Yet

* Isa. lvi, 2. † Jeremias ii, 8.

the holy Doctor soon lets you see that he is not by any means referring to intellectual preparation; to the acquiring of learning; to the mastery of what we should now call philosophy, ethics or divinity; or even to knowledge of holy Scripture. He means this—that a man cannot be a good pastor unless he is first of all a holy man. To be the physician of souls, a man must have learnt the laws of the spiritual life. There may be knowledge, of a sort; but if a man teaches one thing and does another, he is no pastor. No man does more hurt to the Church than he who bears a holy name and office, and yet leads a bad life. *Peritia*, therefore, in the eyes of St Gregory —the being an expert in the art of the shepherd of souls—is the having and possessing true and valid sanctity of life.

Everything in the Seminary is adapted to form in the heart and mind of the aspirant to the pastorate that holiness of which St Gregory speaks. But it is not a work to which the man himself always attaches sufficient importance. That is to say, the student generally contents himself with allowing his virtue to grow at its own pace, without in any way forcing it on, or troubling himself with any conscious and formal views and efforts in regard to its formation or specific direction. Now, nothing can be more true than that solid, simple and genuine virtue grows far better in a simple and unaffected soul. Self-consciousness is one of the worst obstacles to true holiness; formal regulation of the interior, self-inspection, and analysis of progress, are very easily carried too far. This is more especially true of the young.

Nevertheless, as St Gregory says, a man who has not acquired virtue is not fit to be a Pastor;

and there can be no doubt that unless he labours at its acquisition whilst still in his years of preparation, he will never acquire it.

Let us observe, therefore, that when we speak of the acquisition of virtue, we may mean either the several specific virtues, or that general and all-embracing virtuous habit which consists in the union of the soul with the God who made us for Himself. The labour and energy of the soul of a servant of God will always be occupied with virtue in both these senses. But with the young, it is much more important that they should give themselves wholly to God, than that they should strive to acquire specific virtues. There are some virtues which are hardly specific, such as humility, obedience and detachment; they are only other names for whole-hearted consecration to God. It is in the acquisition of these dispositions that the seminarist will exert himself. It is by no means meant to be implied that he must not practise temperance, honesty, patience, chastity and kindness; but he will practise them without thinking much about them, or formulating his views about them. But what he *must* do, if he is to be a pastor after God's own heart, is to set before himself in the most explicit, the plainest and the most earnest way, that he must give his whole heart to God. He can never begin this too soon. Unless he has aspirations of this kind—and very definite aspirations—during his training, he will never be anything but *imperitus*—an unskilled workman—in the care of souls. Whatever he learns, if he does not acquire this, he will be a blunderer and perhaps a destroyer, it may be to his very life's end.

There are two parts or processes in the spiritual life of a Church student, the consideration

of which will help us to see in detail how this great aspiration may take shape and substance. One is Vocation, and the other is Conversion. They are really two sides of one great spiritual fact; of that momentous crisis in his soul's history which must occur to every youthful aspirant, if he is in the way that leads to a truly consecrated priesthood.

We will therefore consider, first Vocation, and then Conversion.

Vocation, or the call of God to the sacred ministry, is neither a miraculous interference of Providence, nor, on the other hand, a mere persuasion of a pious fancy. In order to describe what is meant by vocation, let me translate a passage from an experienced author of recent date, Father Ignatius Schüch, of the Austrian Benedictines of Kremsmünster.

In the ninth edition of his most useful Pastoral Theology, this learned and practical writer says:

"When divine Providence destines any one to a certain state of life, it bestows upon him a natural inclination thereto, and gives him the dispositions necessary for the fulfilment of what that state of life implies. If inclination and dispositions are absent, we can conclude that God does not call; if they exist, we may infer that He does, and the more securely in proportion to the strength of such inclination and dispositions. Hence, if a youth is indifferent towards the priestly state, or thinks lightly of its excellence; if he experiences a certain disinclination or dislike, or perhaps disquiet and aversion, for celibacy, prayer, the divine offices, a life of recollection, theological study, or the duties of the care of souls; if he is fond of

secular occupation, is inclined to the pleasures of the world and feels more satisfaction in serving the world than God, such a one carries not the marks of a divine vocation, and his entering the service of God can only be from some unworthy motive, such as convenience, ambition or the love of money. On the other hand, one who holds in high esteem the state and duties of the priest, who feels himself drawn to them, who experiences pleasure and satisfaction in the service of God, in a life of chastity, in prayer, in retirement, and in sacred studies, and who is determined to seek in the pastoral office the honour of God alone and the salvation of his own soul and the souls of others—in him it is impossible to mistake the call of God. And the purer the intention and the more firm the resolution to do and to suffer all for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, the more certain is the vocation, and the more joyful and blessed will be the co-operation therewith. And if we desire to have a proof of the genuineness of any one's inclinations towards the Priesthood, and of the purity of his intention, there is none better than the earnest endeavour to cultivate the talents and powers given by God and to dispose and prepare oneself more and more for the due fulfilment of the Pastoral office."*

This is a practical exposition of the nature and effects of an ecclesiastical vocation. It is not our task at present to discuss the life of the Seminary. We are to lay down general principles, learning those principles from St Gregory. All the detail of the student's life is valuable and

* Handbuch der Pastoral-Theologie, von P. Ignaz Schüch, p. 16. Innsbrück, 1893.

necessary. But there are one or two ideas which ought to fill his heart with a holy ambition, to pour a sacred light on the years of his preparation, and to lift him out of the natural frivolity and irresponsibility of youth.

One of these thoughts is the anticipation of his great ministry. The *regimen animarum* is the chief of all arts. From the beginning of his book, St Gregory keeps before the eye of his reader the "weight," the "dizzy height," of the government of souls. With him, it is *pondus regiminis*, *culmen regiminis*, *sacrum officium*. A man not destined to such an office might be in many ways imperfect, and yet God would not judge him severely. But for the supreme art of a pastor of souls, a man must be prepared by something like perfect sanctity; "he must be dead to his passions, insensible to pleasure, firm in adversity, and absolutely spiritual in all his views."* The reason of this is, that the pastor has to reach the souls of men; not merely to speak, to rule outwardly, to command and to exhort, but to reach the soul, to touch the soul, to draw the soul, to purify and perfect the soul; not the body merely, but the hidden and elusive soul. Common methods of influence are of little use here. Eloquence, industry, diplomacy, the power of commanding position or the influence of a strong character—none of these, nor all of them together, are of much avail here, unless there is something more. It is St Gregory's view that a soul can only be made perfect by a soul already perfect. It is the likeness of Christ in the pastor that transforms the member of the flock into the likeness of Christ. The study of literature, the art of rhetoric, the skill

* I, cap. x.

of the theologian, the address of the man of culture—a student may possibly spend much labour on these things, but the souls of men, women and children are not gripped by them. These things may touch the surface of a soul. There may be an immediate effect, a temporary success. But souls are not conquered to Christ, and the Kingdom of God is not built up, without something else.

A soul is itself a little-explored and mysterious realm. Its motives and its impulses are difficult to recognize and unravel; it is hard to reach, hard to touch, hard to influence; its virtues are never pure, and its vices never unrelieved; neither its strength nor its weakness, neither its riches nor its poverty can ever be so well investigated or described as not to have many a surprise in reserve for the man who would dogmatize and define. The flock of Christ, that is handed over to the care of the pastor of souls, is made up of souls like this; souls that may be high in this world or low, whose outward dress and robe may be splendour or may be miserable, and whose surroundings must vary through every degree and shade of difference. For each one of these innumerable souls the Son of God would die again and again if it were needful. As far as the Pastor is concerned, they are a flock—a portion of a great flock; and to that flock it is his duty to administer and to apply those "mysteries of God" which are in the world through the Blood of the Cross. He must treat them as a flock; that is, he must gather them together, act as a priest in their assemblies, hold them in the unity of faith and obedience and walk with them as an example. But he must also treat them as individual souls, with individual

characters; requirements, virtues and failings. He must be at the call of every sinner, at the sick-bed whenever death threatens, on the traces of every wandering and straying child of the heavenly Father. He must be physician, judge and father, all in one, and all at once, neither repulsing with severity, nor killing with misplaced kindness. He must be prepared to answer to God for the souls committed to Him. Can anything more be said? Any one who would undertake this difficult and supreme art without preparation—*imperitus*—would deserve all the chastisements that those are threatened with who sin by presumption and tempt Almighty God.

Now it must be remembered that in speaking of preparation for the ministry of souls, we are not for a moment maintaining that the student can dispense with the study of letters or the skill of speech and law and spiritual discretion. These things are essential. What we are referring to is something more: a species of preparation which is more difficult to put into a text-book, but which can be, to some extent, learnt without a text-book, and almost without a master, except the Holy Spirit. A priest must be a man of God *at his ordination*, or else he is not prepared for his ministry. He must have become a serious, solid, determined servant of God, with his whole heart given to God, and an explicit dedication of himself to his Heavenly Father. He may not have thereby acquired the habits of all the specific virtues. His tongue will still be unruly, his temper will often break from his control, his sensuality will lead him into sin, and his obedience will be imperfect. But he ought to have, and must have, the great predominating and directing virtue of all—the firm consecration of the heart

and will to God. With this he will never drift far in the direction of sin. With this he will constantly recall himself to the duty of disciplining his character by grace. But without this he will find himself at the outset of his ministry like a man adrift in a boat without oar or rudder.

St Gregory is never tired of repeating that a man who is set over souls before he is a man of God himself, is exposed to the greatest danger. A man of this kind, he says, is seized upon by "dissipation" and "elation." First, he forgets such principles as he had before, and next, the sheer good humour and pleasure of being in a position of authority relaxes his whole character, never really made strong by the one only means that can make a man strong.

Even a "good man," says the holy Doctor, is severely tried by being placed over others. A humble life, an austere life, saves a man from many temptations. For this reason our Lord Himself has given us the lesson that we find in His refusal of earthly honours and His rejection of a kingdom in this world. A life of quiet simple duty, more especially if it be trying to the flesh, affords no opportunity for the spirit of vanity, of egotism, of what St Gregory calls "*elation*." But the moment one has to act publicly, prominently, perhaps masterfully, there comes the afterthought, I did it; it is I who have succeeded; it is I whom these people obey; it is I who must make myself felt. Many a man, as the holy Doctor here points out, was modest and good until he was elevated, and then he fell into pride and disobedience; like Saul, who at first was so filled with the thought of his unworthiness that he fled, but afterwards, through dread of being lowered in the eyes of the people, disobeyed Almighty God.

All the Saints have taught what St Gregory here lays down. Even solid and practised virtue can hardly stand the accession to honour and authority.

What, then, must be the danger of the priesthood to the shallow and half-trained youth who has never looked seriously into the failings and the weakness of his own heart? There is perhaps little fault to find with him during the years of his studies. He obeys, he works fairly well, he is not outwardly greedy or selfish; he keeps his place in the ranks, in the routine, neither very conspicuous for zeal, nor very notable for remissness. All this is perfectly compatible with very feeble virtue. His life does not call upon his virtue. His character and nature are such that he prefers to march along in the routine rather than to risk discomfort by making any fight for his own convenience. His position, in a seminary, is perhaps an easier one than he would have had in the world. To put off the "ignominy of the secular habit" has to him been not a sacrifice but a relief. He has not felt as yet any keen trouble, or had to face any heavy cross. Whilst he obeys, therefore, it is rather through easiness of temper than on any supernatural principle; whilst he works, it is because it would never do to imperil his ordination by failing in his studies; whilst he leads a regular life, it is rather out of custom than holy mortification; and whilst he lives at peace with his companions, it is rather because it is troublesome and stupid to quarrel than because he loves the souls for which Christ died. When a youth like this is ordained—and he cannot be refused ordination—the trouble begins He was all right in the harbour—behind the breakwater. But the waves of the great world, and even those disturbances

that find their way into a little congregation, a small cure of souls, will try him and search him. First comes the tendency to take things easy now that he is more or less his own master. He has never really learned and studied self-denial, which is at the root of the Christian life, and therefore he is at once drawn to a score of different kinds of self-indulgence—to shortening his prayer, to irregularity in hours, to reading novels and newspapers, and to the study of his comfort in eating, sleeping, etc. He has never really got down to what true humility is; and therefore success elates him, the miserable flattery of the ignorant pleases him, a rebuke or even a piece of advice hurts him, and any little failure makes him wretched. He has practised, let us hope, the holy virtue of purity; but he has never penetrated what is meant by worldliness; he has never understood that free and unrestrained intercourse with men and women, and the finding one's pleasure in worldly amusements and worldly ways, are as dangerous to purity of heart as the malaria of an African coast is to the body; and therefore he soon begins to grow worldly, in manners, in words, in dress, in occupation; he finds society pleasant—and it need not be the highest or the most refined society either; he loses his time in unpriestly recreation; he forms friendships; he yields to the pleasure that he finds in the company of women; perhaps he burns his fingers, is laughed at, and learns a lesson; perhaps things go further, and the poor weak and foolish young man causes a scandal, or becomes an apostate. Probably he has not learnt true patience, or gentleness, or refinement; he has restrained himself, it is true, but rather be-

cause resignation or temper or grossness of conduct would have been laughed at or summarily put down in the society of the Seminary. When he goes out, therefore, and there is no one to take him up for his language or his actions, nature has her way. He cannot bear pain or trouble; he has never learned how to turn bodily or mental suffering into love, and so by it to draw nearer to God. He shows his impatience quite openly, like a child; he commiserates himself; he forgets every one else. He is utterly careless whether his little peculiarities are or are not a source of annoyance to others. He develops bad temper, and the habit of scolding. Priests' bad temper has driven innumerable souls back into the bonds of sin. Scolding is the resonance of the empty intelligence, and of the hollow heart, of a man who has nothing to give, nothing to propose, nothing to impart. As he grows older he naturally does not improve; he grows more querulous, more exacting, more inconsiderate, and more childish. And he thus spoils the work of the Holy Spirit and neutralizes himself as one of the spiritual forces of the world.

Thus we see what St Gregory would mean by a Vocation. To him, it would be a definite view leading to a determinate disposition of life. The end or aim is the care of souls and the priestly office generally; the means are the exercises of the seminary taken up in the strong and manly spirit of one who aims at schooling his heart to the solid virtue of a servant of God.

The acquisition of this spirit of entire dedication to God may come by imperceptible degrees, or it may come almost suddenly. It is called Conversion; and that word implies, as it would

appear, a certain definite change or alteration. Perhaps it may be asserted without exaggeration that there are moments in the life of every young man when it is possible to feel —or to recognize on looking back—that a considerable and important step has been taken. Sometimes the first Communion marks a step of this kind. Sometimes it is the consequence of a retreat. Sometimes it follows upon some visitation—affliction, death or suffering. Sometimes, again, there is one of those decided calls of God, such as came to the sleeping child in the Temple—a call that finds the soul in the quiet of the night, or at the deathbed of a companion, or during the reading of the life of a saint. On such occasions, what happens may be thus described: The heart sees something, awakes to something that was there all the time, but unregarded; something that has to do with death, judgement and eternity, and with God. Then a kind of power from on high seems given, and the heart flames out in a strong and generous resolution. This brings with it the breaking with some person, or thing, some occasion of sin, some evil habit. Then, if it is truly a conversion, some kind of new life begins; greater care and regularity in prayer and the sacraments, greater mortification, more exact obedience, more scrupulous industry. And with all this, if the conversion is anything more than a fancy, or a sudden fright, or a castle in the air, there comes a specific increase of piety—piety in its true sense, of loving union with God, with Jesus Christ, with our Lady and the saints. When one looks back, one can see that, at or about a given time, all these symptoms so plainly shewed themselves that one's life before and one's life after—one's exis-

tence or personality before and one's self after—are divided from one another like stages in a journey, or like stations in the ascent of a mountain. There can be no doubt whatever that one is different. This change of heart, or conversion, may happen more than once, even in youth. As a matter of fact, with those youths whom God really calls to Himself, it nearly always takes place twice. There is first of all that steadying of the character and turning to religious ways which marks the moment when one begins to look forward to the sacerdotal or religious state—or, at least, when one is awakened to observe that there are two classes of people in the world, the religious and the non-religious, and one elects to be on the side of religion. This may be about twelve to fourteen, according to maturity of character; and the result, though it includes all that has been just now described, may be called (if we want a single word) seriousness; for that is what outwardly appears; not moroseness or sadness, but a distinct seriousness of view in regard to self-restraint, work and aspirations; with some priggishness, no doubt, occasionally; with what looks like hypocrisy perhaps; with a certain ungainliness and awkwardness in the effort to control the limbs and muscles of exuberant youth to the principles of the spiritual life. But these matters are chiefly external, and a wise superior knows how to allow for them. Not so one's companions. They are extremely apt—even when they are making similar efforts themselves—to mock and jeer and to say things hard to bear; and sometimes much harm is done by their inconsiderateness, boys being made ashamed of professing themselves religious; and some sink-

ing again by degrees into recklessness. It is not an unmixed evil that a conversion should be submitted, in a moderate degree, to a trial of this kind; and we may be sure that in our present schools and colleges the tone and supervision will always guard genuine piety from downright persecution.

The second conversion may occur towards the end of the literary course, or during the course of the studies of the Seminary. It is most frequently the result of a retreat. Retreats vary exceedingly in their effects upon the heart. A young man goes through retreat after retreat, and he is hardly touched, or "pricked," as the old phrase was. Then comes a retreat which effectually reaches the heart and changes one's life. Natural causes, no doubt, frequently contribute to this result: the feeling that the preacher is a man of God; increased maturity of mind; good reading; the quiet influence of the chapel, with all that it implies; and sometimes the society and conversation of others. But it is the pure grace and call of God which is chiefly to be thanked. And I do not say this merely in the sense in which it is a truism in spirituality; but because, in looking back, it comes out with the plainest evidence that there was no sufficient reason, either visible or internal, for our then choosing God in the way we did, and that it must have been because God had mercy on us and spoke to our heart. This second conversion naturally goes deeper, and carries the heart further than the first. Now, besides assiduity in the ordinary duties of piety, self-denial and obedience, there come the intelligent and adequate use of mental prayer; the understanding of what our Lord Jesus Christ is to the world

and to the individual soul; the perception of the office of the Holy Spirit, and of the necessity for the continual spiritualization of the routine of life; the recognition of the wisdom of the words and actions of the Saints; and perhaps some idea of the purifying and elevating force of suffering. A young man, with these growths in his heart and intelligence, soon begins to form what spiritual writers call habits of solid virtue; that is, certain views and certain ways of acting, learnt from spiritual sources, become firm, usual and habitual; the mind holds these views and principles as part of its equipment (just as a soldier carries his uniform and arms), the will acts upon them promptly and easily, and the heart, on the whole, feels pleasure in carrying them out.

This is that *soliditas timoris intimi* which St Gregory wishes all to acquire before the priesthood; the "solid spiritual fear" of the soul. This is what he calls a few lines further down the *studium suæ inquisitionis*, the "earnest pursuit of self-knowledge." The fear of God and the knowledge of self are the foundations of the spiritual life. On them is built up the dedication of the heart. These things are to be gained in the quiet years of a man's preparation. To be ordained before one possesses them, is a misfortune and a danger. All who have studied the letters of this great Pope are aware that this is exactly what he lamented in his own case. There was, for him, as we are well aware, no need for any such complaint. No press of work or accumulation of business ever interfered with the sincerity of his lowliness or the union of his heart with God. But he mourned for the lost days of his "contemplation;" he mourned for his "*quies*";

for the *gaudia quietis meæ;* for the lofty heights of his *quies;* for the keenness of his "contemplation"—*acies contemplationis.* "My uneasy heart," he says, in the preface of the Dialogues, "wounded and sore with external occupation, remembers what it used to be in the cloister; how all transitory things were far beneath it; how it soared above all that happens on earth; how its thoughts were of nothing but things heavenly." And in that letter *—a sort of encyclical on the Pastoral Office—which he addressed to the four Patriarchs, he recalls the vision of Jacob, and says that the preachers of the Church ought at one and the same time to dwell in contemplation with the Head of the Church who leaneth on the top of the ladder, and to descend to the members of the Church, represented by the anointed stone at its foot. It is very clear, therefore, what he means by the *soliditas timoris intimi.* He means what we may call the serious service of God. That service is grounded on faith, fear and love. But as its distinguishing note is seriousness, therefore the holy Doctor calls it "fear" and "self-searching." No aspirant to the priesthood should be content with himself if he cannot find within his heart some signs of this serious turning to God. Happy are they with whom it first began in the reverent earnestness and simplicity of a Catholic childhood, and in whom it grows all through life, with increasing light and fervour, even until the priest has to render the account of his stewardship.

* Lib. i, Ep. 25.

CHAPTER II

Can a Priest ever acquire Solid Virtue if he has not acquired it before his Ordination?

THERE is a very striking teaching of St Gregory in the ninth chapter of the first book. He has spoken of the necessity, in the aspirant to the sacred ministry, of preparation; of solid virtue and real conversion. He now adds that a man very rarely acquires real virtue *in the priesthood;* that if he has not acquired it before, he will never acquire it after his ordination. These are his words: *Nequaquam valet in culmine humilitatem discere, qui in imis positus non desiit superbire.** A man cannot attain humility in a position of superiority, who has not got over pride when an inferior. "A man does not learn to despise the flattery that comes of necessity in the care of souls, who thirsted after vanity when no flattery came." "A man may judge himself by his early life." Let him not deceive himself; he will never be really much better. This is a very strong view to take—and at first sight it seems like an exaggeration. Do we not see men who were more or less imperfect during their seminary course, become serious after ordination, and seemingly rise to the demands of their position? Is the grace of the priesthood to count for nothing, and the innumerable spiritual helps of a priest's life? On this I would venture to make the following observations:

1. It is undoubtedly true, and evident, that some unmortified, idle and disagreeable youths

* I, ix.

do turn into serious and even dignified priests. Some, before they attain to this, go through a period of restlessness, turbulence and of modified rebellion as assistant priests. They make it almost impossible for the Bishop to employ them as curates. They profess to do what they call "their duty"; but their foolish ideas of independence and their want of considerateness for others, make the results of that duty very uncertain, and spoil the common work for souls. They long for a place of their own. When they get it, things seem to improve. The old displays of assumption, pettishness and smallness cease and disappear. There is quietness, respectability, regularity, and even dignity. But this desirable change, you will observe, is brought about, not by the priest having governed any bad impulse, but only because he has got his way; because the bridle has been taken off his neck, and the bit out of his mouth. Many a horse that kicks in the shafts looks quiet enough at grass. It is no matter how "respectable" a priest of this kind grows; he will never be solidly virtuous. He will probably continue to do his routine duties—until something upsets him. He may put on more respectability and greater dignity as his hair turns grey—but he will probably hug his selfishness closer and closer to the end. It is not unlikely that he will develop the vice of avarice. He will be very easy with himself in regard to ecclesiastical laws, and even to divine commands. He will say that these things, in their strictness, are for beginners. He will resent all interference with his status, his income and his comfort; he will carry such resentment sometimes even to scandal. He will say, "Thank God I am comfortable now, and I am not going to be disturbed if

I can help it." When we admit, therefore, that imperfect young men may become respectable and respected priests, we must carefully distinguish respectability from real virtue. Such priests too often have no real humility, or spirit of obedience, or supernatural aspirations. If you ask me what matter this makes, I answer, first, that in such priests the grace of the priesthood and the power of the Mass seem wasted; secondly, that such priests are not safe against scandalous falls; thirdly, that such priests cannot be depended upon in any emergency; and, fourthly, that such priests, through their want of self-sacrifice, are the chief reason why the country is not converted, conversion depending far more on the interior spirit than the outward word.

2. Next, it should be carefully noticed how true it is—whether of priests who are self-willed and disagreeable, or of the more easy-going ones who prefer rather to wait than to fight for their comforts—that the reason they seldom or never become men of God is precisely because they have never undergone a thorough "conversion" before their ordination. Because, if they have never solidly turned to God, or given Him their whole heart, during their time of discipline and subjection, what is there in the priesthood to make them turn to Him? You will say—Surely the new weight of responsibility, the awful dignity, will make an impression on them? I grant that this may be true of the actual occasion of ordination; and I would include that moment of grace in the period of their preparation. But if a man passes through that time without complete conversion, then new interests, constant occupation, and human weakness will continue to prevent any thorough subsequent change of heart. This is St

Gregory's view. Humanly speaking, a man is much less likely to turn seriously to God when he is busy, in full work, respected and perhaps flattered, than he was in the silence and humility of the seminary. Experience proves this to be most true. If a man is not awakened before his ordination, during the time he is thinking, hoping, studying, doubting, he is not likely to undergo that spiritual conversion when he is secure, in a position of honour and authority, his hours somewhat irregular, his pleasures keener, and his books reposing on the shelf.

The thing is not impossible, for God's mercy is great, and there are occasions, such as a retreat, which may bring a man to God's feet any time in his life. But this rarely happens with any one who has wasted his youth in tepidity, and has never been completely awakened to the holy fear of which St Gregory speaks. Graces, however great and precious, do not operate mechanically. A man is not brought to God by encountering grace, as one's breath is taken away by a dash of cold water, but by its taking hold of him, and of his understanding, his will and his feelings. In order to turn to God, there must be a preliminary rousing of one's natural being; and although this also comes from God's grace, yet in relation to the spiritual life which follows it may be termed the work of nature; so that it is true to say, in this sense, that unless a man makes some little natural exertion to begin with, the graces among which he may live no more operate to their full extent than the fire will blaze before you strike the flint. Now the man who has had no conversion in youth never, as a rule, makes this exertion. Hence, Masses, sacraments, the divine office, prayer and retreats

are of little use to him. He lives with the shutters closed, although the brightness of the morning is round about him. He goes on till his death without having given his heart thoroughly to God. He may not be what is called a bad man. That is, he may not remain in mortal sin, and may, from time to time, make acts of charity and contrition. But he is not a spiritual man—not a man of God. And his soul, which ought to rise to the heights of the priestly grace, and to be a most choice and precious conquest of the Precious Blood, honouring its Redeemer more than the whole universe of unspiritual things, remains in a half developed state, its possibilities frustrated and its career a failure; whilst it can take little or no share in that work of salvation and of conversion which those alone carry on who are united to the Divine Heart of Jesus.

3. Thirdly and finally, I would make an admission, which may appear to some extent a modification of St Gregory's doctrine, that a man rarely acquires solid virtue after his ordination. Missionary countries have special graces. Although in this country the actual conversions that we make are relatively few, and scarcely affect the surface of English life, yet our priests, by God's grace, do a great missionary work; for they more or less keep firm in Catholic faith and practice the considerable number of souls who profess that faith and practice amid the countless multitudes and the innumerable influences that are hostile to both. What our priests, here and in other English-speaking countries, do in preaching, in services, in catechizing, in controversy, in visiting and education, is something quite beyond the habits and even the conceptions of

priests in France, Italy or Spain. Devotedness is undoubtedly a special grace of this country's true pastors. And my admission is this—that this missionary devotedness may often, to a considerable extent, convert a tepid seminarist into a fervent priest. As in the ages of the persecutions there was a grace of martyrdom, which was at once the precious heritage and the perfecting of many a very imperfect soul, so, with us, the grace of pastoral devotedness is at hand for almost all priests, and it goes a long way to making them men of God.

Hence we may draw the lesson that there are few more needful qualifications in an aspirant for ordination than pastoral devotedness. I have said that this grace is waiting for you when you step out upon the mission. But it is obvious that one may not presume upon that. To presume is to fail—partly because presumption is never blessed, and partly because any man who expects that devotedness will seize him and carry him away in spite of his having been studiously indifferent to it, is as one who tempts God. Now pastoral devotedness seems to consist of three qualities—the love of God, the love of souls, and what I may call the instinct of conquest. It is this last quality—partly a natural one—which distinguishes the pastor from the contemplative. A holy contemplative loves God, loves his neighbour's soul, and often does more for conversions, by his interior prayer and his nearness to the Cross, than the preacher or the controversialist. But he has not that active, energetic, courageous, indomitable nature, which burns to encounter evils, to rescue souls, and to build up with its own exertion the visible kingdom of God. This is the

distinctive character of devotedness. In the seminary one practises God's most holy love; but it may sometimes appear that there is no field in which to practise the love of one's neighbour, and much less any opportunity to seize the lance and tilt against the world and the devil. But this involves a misconception. A man does not require a very wide field to learn the primary operations of planting a seed and getting it to grow. That is sometimes best learned on a small scale. A young man who masters the art of forgetting self, who works into his being the habit of never hurting a superior or a companion, and who sees that all his available energies are always in good order and ready to engage in study, prayer, or recreation, at the given time and according to the prescribed mode and degree—that young man has got the seed of devotedness in the soil of his soul, and it will come up without fail. Premature excursions into the field of active operations are a mistake, even if they were possible in a seminary course. The novices of the Society of Jesus practise catechizing the poor. With seminarists there would be inconveniences in this. Very carefully conducted and watched over, such exercises would doubtless conduce to a true understanding of the word "devotedness." But they are not really necessary. In the same way any work outside the college, or such attempts as involve publishing and writing to the newspapers, nearly always lead to what St Gregory calls "elation." A soul which is a good deal taken up with interests outside the seminary or the seminary course, can no more solidify into habits of virtue than a running stream can freeze.

The grace of "devotedness," then, let us hope,

is a grace which every missionary priest in this country will receive at his entrance on the mission—and, as in all the operations of grace, "devotedness" will be given in the largest measure to those who are already essentially and radically "devoted." And, by God's help, even to those who have been indifferent and unspiritual, it will prove a guardian angel. It will keep them occupied, and diminish the occasions of sin. It will keep them face to face with stern and instructive realities—such as poverty, degradation, unhappiness, sickness and death. It will call upon their self-denial, and keep them near to Gethsemane and to Calvary. It will keep them humble, and teach them how little they can do. It will open their hearts to pity and compassion —feelings which are altogether divine in their power of drawing the heart nearer to God. It will throw them into the arms of their heavenly Father, by urging them to pray for help, for guidance and for success. But "devotedness" has also its dangers. It may, and does sometimes, make a man give up his regular mental prayer. This is so fatal that a life of devotedness without interior prayer tends to become merely a natural fighting, striving and labouring, indulged in for the sake of excitement, or for reputation, or for advancement. Moreover, no priest can practise even outward "devotedness" long, if he does not pray; for this simple reason, that a life of devotedness implies to a very large extent a life of disappointment and of failure; and no one can persevere under bad success without a supernatural view of life and motive. Hence, although the grace of devotedness does undoubtedly make priests in this country much more near being men of God than many

of them otherwise would be, every candidate for that holy state should do his utmost to lay deep in his nature the foundations of true self-devotion, in order that even this great privilege of our missionary condition may not dry up amid our work, and leave us mere shapes of true missionaries without the spirit of God or His benediction.

CHAPTER III

On Purity of Soul

ST GREGORY begins the Second Book of the "Regula Pastoralis" with these words: "The pastor must excel his flock in his conduct as much as the life of a shepherd ought to be above that of his sheep." This sentence has often been quoted since the holy pontiff's days. It is the introduction to that portion of the treatise in which he is to speak of the life and behaviour of the pastor. This is St Gregory's summary of a pastor's qualifications. He must be: (1) pure in thought; (2) excellent in behaviour; (3) discreet in silence and useful in speech; (4) sympathetic and kind to all; (5) pre-eminently a man of contemplation; (6) fraternizing unaffectedly with the good, whilst setting himself with just zeal against the offences of the wicked; (7) neither abandoning the interior for the exterior, nor neglecting the exterior for the interior. These points are treated, sometimes in identical words, in the Synodical Letter to the Patriarchs (Lib. i, Ep. 25).*

* Sit ergo necesse est cogitatione mundus, actione præcipuus, discretus in silentio, utilis in verbo, singulis compassione proximus, præ cunctis in contemplatione suspensus, bene agentibus per humilitatem socius, contra delinquentium vitia per

In the present chapter we will confine ourselves to the first—that of Purity or cleanness of thought. This expression means a great deal more than the words, in modern spiritual books, are usually taken to signify. He is speaking here of nothing less than that complete "purgation" which eliminates from the soul all that stands in the way of grace. It includes the predominance of wisdom over impulse; the humility of the Catholic spirit, as contrasted with the seeking for novelties in faith; cleanness from carnal desires and from avarice; disinterestedness, as compared with self-seeking; and the absence of personal animus or envy or anger in dealing with others. This conception of a pure interior, or a purged spirit, is quite patristic. It is what is indicated by our Lord Himself in the beatitude *Beati mundo corde.*

To the Fathers, a man's nature grows for itself rank things, and it must be purified. It grows false views of life, crude aspirations, wanton desires, selfish impulses. The business of religion and of grace is to cleanse the heart. This was in accordance with the teaching of the best Pagans. Aristotle, it will be remembered, insists very strongly on a certain purgation, or pacifying, of the passions, which is attained by philosophy; and among the instruments of philosophy he mentions tragedy and the drama in general, in which (if it be worthy and good) the objectionable and baser impulses of humanity are, by example, and by the force of pity, directed aright, toned down and refined. In several of the Fathers—for example in the account given

zelum justitiæ erectus, internorum curam in exteriorum occupatione non minuens, exteriorum providentiam in internorum sollicitudine non relinquens.

by St Gregory Thaumaturgus of his own training under Origen—we find references to this most needful work of purification. It is needless to say that the Fathers had the means of making their prescriptions much more practical than those of Aristotle. To the philosophical precepts of rational ethics, they added the example of practical Christianity. St Gregory here, after his manner in the mystical use of Holy Scripture, refers to the breastplate worn by the Jewish high-priest.* It is not only *Rationale judicis*, a symbol of the supremacy of reason in a pastor, but it carries the names of the twelve Patriarchs, by which is signified that the pastor must have continually before his eyes the lives of the Saints and the Fathers; because it is in the example of the Saints that we see what this purity of heart means. We may say that we have, in this chapter of the Regula, the foundation of the Church's ascetical teaching in purity of heart in pastors. In other writers, for example in Cassian, you find the doctrine applied to the monastic state. Here the great Pope, leaving out of sight for the moment the individual's spiritual profit, lays down the maxim that unless a man be "pure" of heart he is not fit to be a priest of souls. It would be wise, therefore, if every candidate for the priesthood meditated deeply on these words. For this purity must be in great measure attained before ordination. And it is to be feared that some aspirants do not understand it.

The great means of attaining the interior pureness of which we here speak is—leaving out of consideration the imitation of Christ—the practice of mortification. But it must be well understood what mortification is. Some theo-

* Exodus xxviii, 15.

retical knowledge of Christian ethical philosophy is needed in order that mortification may result in real purity of the soul. For mortification is an exercise; and it is an exercise of the human powers and faculties; and it is quite possible that the human powers and faculties, in operating for the expulsion of one kind of impurity or defilement, may themselves, in that very act, be defiled with "impurity," and impurity of a deeper and more radical kind. It is also possible to be eager and active in dispelling one kind of defilement whilst paying no attention to a worse sort. We have known men and women who have mortified themselves for a long time—that is, have lived up to duty, faced the disagreeable, endured physical discomfort and spontaneously carried out penances, and yet whose hearts were rank enough in unkindness, vanity, bad temper and frivolity. So a youth is brought up in a good Catholic tradition of mortification; but with him it comes to be routine, custom, or a kind of half pagan stoicism, or perhaps an equally pagan policy of squaring accounts with God. To attain, by mortification and other means, real purity of heart, one has to be taught. There are certain rules which too many young people never learn, and in the absence of which much of their most laudable and touching mortification is wasted.

First, it is not *pain* which is the object or purpose of mortification—not the brave endurance of disagreeable sensation—but the union of the heart to God. Any one who endures pain, whether self-inflicted or coming from circumstances outside of his control, without turning by an act of the heart to God, is like a person who fights manfully, yet when he has won the fight has not the intelligence to pick up what the fight was for.

Secondly, it is not mortifications, in the plural, that are important, but mortification in the singular. Some of us are in bondage to "practices." This is frequently the case with young men. Whilst fully granting that perseverance is to be commended, I would point out that no single practice, or any line of practice, is so important as a disposition to find mortification in everything, and to insist on no practice which interferes with obedience, health, duty or kindness.

Thirdly, a life of mortification is of little use unless we mortify that in us which most wants mortifying. Many a Saul obstinately objects to hew in pieces his Agag. We have known a youth whose weakness was eating, but whose favourite mortification was keeping silence for five minutes after supper. We have known another who was vain of his hands and his hair, and cultivated and displayed them without any self-restraint, and who practised as a mortification going without salt on Fridays. There are more serious cases. The inability to bear failure is a weakness which is common, and which, in a priest's life, will prove disastrous; yet it is not unusual to find a young man with this canker spot in his constitution, who never makes an effort in classes, examinations, games, etc., to mortify the foolish vanity which is its chief begetter, although he may practise self-denial in half-a-dozen other things.

Fourthly, although mortification is a universal duty, in a sense, yet as to practices we should undertake only one thing at a time; that is, we should concentrate our efforts on one region in the map of our weakness, and stick to that for a time sufficiently long to make an impression on

it. This should be done with some advice; and it has the further advantage of accustoming the soul to self-examination, which is most useful unless it is carried to a morbid excess.

Fifthly, we should begin by taking in hand those external defects which give bad example or inconvenience to others; both because it is a primary duty to avoid scandal and inconsiderateness to those around us, and because the rational way to kill an evil propensity is to begin by suppressing its external manifestation.

Sixthly, it is extremely necessary that all external mortifications, except very trifling ones, should be submitted to the judgement of a director. The reason of this is, partly, because grace and victory are promised to obedience, partly because much harm is occasionally incurred by imprudent youths through ill-chosen mortification; but most of all because a director will generally divine what the precise matter is which most requires the knife of mortification, and whether he orders us to apply it, or whether he merely restrains and controls our aspirations in other directions, the gain to our souls is very great.

Seventhly, and finally, it is needful to understand, and to understand very practically, that exterior mortification is by no means the whole of mortification, but that it is indefinitely more needful that there should be mortification of the interior. By exterior mortification is meant any self-denial or annoyance which affects the senses, or which is embodied in an external experience. Thus, fasting or a discipline is an exterior mortication; but a humiliation, or the keeping silence when we have a good answer, or the restraint of curiosity—these also are exterior mortifications

although the pain is mental. In regard to the former class, it is a mere commonplace to say that they are no mortifications unless they are interiorly accepted. But any director will tell you—and indeed any reflecting mind knows—how very seldom any suffering or inconvenience *is* accepted with really supernatural dispositions; whether it be a mortification which is voluntarily undergone (too often a mere feat or *tour de force*—"I said I would do it, and I have done it"), or one of the far more useful sort which come from persons or circumstances. How seldom is the natural irritation at being hurt or injured perfectly offered up! Even when the mortification is not in the body or the senses, but in the mental and spiritual feelings—as when one has to undergo a humiliation—interior acceptation by no means invariably follows. The mere fact that a humiliation is incorporated, as it were, in an exterior occurrence is apt to induce a man to consider that outside occurrence as the essence of the mortification. On these occasions we find ourselves full of gratification that we have borne our humiliation with a decent and edifying exterior, whilst all the time, perhaps, we have never humbled our heart to embrace it. We are like an invalid who watches his doctor mix him a bottle, and surveys it with satisfaction as it stands duly corked and labelled by his bedside, and who then composes himself to sleep without swallowing any of the physic. For such reasons as these, which are found in the clay of human nature, a large proportion of our external mortifications do not purify or purge the heart.

In order that they may do so, and may not be wasted, the alphabet of spirituality, or the multiplication table of Christian reckoning, or

the grammar of the supernatural—whichever you like to call it—should be assiduously kept clearly in working order in the mind. No physical fact, including mental or spiritual rebuffs or annoyances, is of any use except in so far as it is accepted by the will. And when a neophyte begins to see this, and to apply it to his outward mortification, it very soon opens out to him a new and vast region for the practice of self-denial and the acquirement of purity of heart. It shows him that he has a very manifold nature, an intelligence, a will, an imagination, affections, instincts, etc., and the grand truth dawns on him that he has far more to do inside his soul than outside of it. He sees that external mortification is only the first stage in the process of purgation. He must go on to purge his affections; all those that are not for God and in God must be cut down and made to wither. He must purge his imagination, for the imagination is the picture-gallery in which a man's passions find their fuel—passions of all the seven deadly kinds. What a life-work is the purification of the imagination! It implies restraint on idle thoughts, stern discipline as to what are called bad thoughts, much self-denial in regard to reading, and the frequentation of the pure atmosphere of the House of Nazareth and of the lives and sayings of the saints.

He must purge his will, for there is in all of us an accursed wilfulness and strain of revolt, which grows by indulgence, and can only be reduced by effort. It is not too much to say that many a well-intentioned, God-fearing, instructed and reasonable priest is over and over again carried off his feet and drawn into mortal sin, not so much by passion or self-indulgence, as by pure human

wilfulness—the lust of doing as one pleases—a wilfulness which, among all his studies, he never analysed, and among all his good works he never immolated at the foot of the Cross. The will is purified by the will; and few exercises are more useful than to detect the ferment of revolt within us, to resist wilfulness by resolute submission, and frequently to offer to our heavenly Father all the willing power of our nature as His and His alone.

Finally, he must purify his intelligence. To do this is to make the heart pure indeed. The intelligence may, for practical purposes, be said to provide us with principles, to supply us with deductions, and to decide us to choose and act. An impure and unregenerate intelligence is like a spring of foul and noxious water. It has, or might have, right views; but, instead, it sees things as the devil sees them, as the world sees them, as the flesh sees them. This may not be the consequence of any sinful excess; it is partly the blindness and malice of nature, partly education and environment. Let no one think he is not concerned here. We all live in the world, and in this century. The intelligence of a large majority of men is extremely impure. The intellectual man of the world, cultured as he may be, with all the accumulated experiences and the enlarged generalizations of so many centuries at his command, is hard and blind and contemptuous towards spiritual ideas. It is only religion, the religion of the Incarnation and the Passion, which can open the eyes of human nature to divine horizons, and soften it to the personal service of a personal God. Priests do not escape this impurity of the intellect—especially those priests who have not undergone the purifying discipline of the continuous teaching and train-

ing of a seminary course. There are priests who profess to admire the agnostic philosophers, the heathen scientists, the non-Catholic commentators, theologians and other writers of the day. Without denying that such men may from time to time be profitably consulted and used, we may say without hesitation that in the mass they are a pestilential cloud of locusts which obscures the sun and devours the earth. Their ideas and views are secular, temporal, worldly, earthly, carnal. And they tend to impart these qualities to all who frequent their schools. To purify the intelligence the bare catechism of truth is not enough. No compendium of Christian philosophy, or manual of Catholic theology, suffices to make an intellect pure which is accustomed to study, to discuss, to savour, impious speculations about God, rationalistic views of the sacred life of Jesus Christ, or bitter criticism of the Church or the Sovereign Pontiffs. It may be a necessity, more or less, to deal with these things; of that let superiors judge, or let advice be taken thereon. But it should be recognized and held that, just as dirt flowing in defiles the stream of water, so false and seductive views and speculations defile pure Christian wisdom; and such defilement impedes union with God, hinders holiness, and is an obstacle to pastoral success. No man whose intelligence is thus unpurified can be trusted to trace out a safe and Catholic line of conduct either for himself or his flock. He will lean to the natural, undervalue the supernatural, miss the mind of the Church, leave the saints unstudied, criticize persons and institutions, advocate lax views on the one hand, and set up for a reformer on the other. Neither can such a one be trusted to decide, or to give sound advice, on

matters connected with vocation, with mixed marriages, or with primary and secondary education, or on any momentous subject in which the spirit of the world is likely to tempt men into dangerous and un-Catholic courses.

I am distinctly of opinion that even in the classes of philosophy, theology and scripture, the placing of what is called objections before the imaginations of the students should be most carefully restrained. I have said "the imagination," although we are here speaking of the intelligence—and for this reason. The mind of the ordinary student sustains little damage from the contemplation of difficult objections, so long as the imagination is not seized by them. For example, the refutation of the Pantheism of David de Dinando, or even of Spinoza, may be attempted without much mental disturbance. But this is not so with the agnosticism of Huxley, or the rationalism of Martineau, or the destructive criticism of Driver; because these men are alive, and can write, and can set a hundred strings vibrating, some of which are sure to pass through our own nervous system. The true method, as it seems to me, is to state objections in terms of pure reason. This is quite sufficient for science, and will furnish the student with all that he requires. In the answers supplied the professor need by no means confine himself to cold reason; on the contrary, I would employ every available means of rousing the will and the fancy against error; and this, unless it induces a man to substitute mere declamation for argument, is perfectly fair and just, for we know that we have the truth, and no lawful means of securing and justifying the truth can be objected to. For similar reasons it would not

be advisable to give students access to modern books against religion or the faith, of the kind here referred to, or to allow them to disturb and defile their minds with the free speculations and hostile criticism which are met with everywhere in the countless periodicals of the day. It is not that, in itself, truth cannot be relied upon to win the battle against error. But, *per accidens*, truth is often in a position to get the worst of it; that is to say, it may be under given circumstances impossible to present truth completely, or adequately, or convincingly. And unless an objection can be not only answered but destroyed—as far as the nature of the case admits—there is always a danger to immature minds. An objection against scripture, religion or faith, should be like the doomed Jericho when the Lord delivered it into the hands of Josue. It should be an anathema, and all things that are in it, to the Lord. It is not enough that the walls should tumble down; every living thing in it should be slain, even to the oxen, the sheep and the asses. The city and all its contents should be burned, except the gold and silver, and vessels of brass and iron; and these, if they are found, should be consecrated to the treasury of the Lord.

St Gregory says that the "fear" or seriousness, of which he spoke in the first book, is a great instrument of this purification of the soul and its powers. For the fear of God, as he says, *Dum mentem Rectoris humiliat, purgat*—"It kills elation, it kills impurity, it kills the love of money." Sinful weaknesses and intellectual uncleanness generally go together. A man who is sensitive against pride and the grosser sins is always sensitive to God's blessed and holy truth. And although pious men are not by any

means invariably intellectual men, that is not the fault of their piety. Piety may sometimes dissuade a man from reading and studying error of a disturbing sort; but, on the other hand, no smartness of the intellect, no acquaintance with modern thought, no familiarity with the errors of the day, will be anything but disastrous to the priest who does not begin by learning his faith like a little child, and loving it like a true son of the heavenly Father. This is a disposition and temper which is not acquired in a day or a week, and we have much reason to thank God for the three or four years (at least) of a divinity course, during which it is possible to bring into the mind and heart that "wisdom" which, as the Wise Man says, "is better than strength"*—strength of body or strength of mind—which is not "earthly, or sensual, or diabolical," but "chaste, peaceable, modest, full of mercy and good fruits." †

CHAPTER IV

Sympathy with Souls

IN treating, in his second book, the various points of a pastor's qualification as enumerated in our last chapter, the method of St Gregory is to exhort the pastor always to keep the middle path between two extremes.

This is an echo of the teaching of the desert; the ancient saints insisting on nothing so forcibly as discretion. The special form of the teaching comes also, without doubt, from the schools of philosophy. For it was the well-known doctrine

* Wisd. vi, 1. † St James iii, 15, 17.

of Aristotle that "a moral virtue is an elective habit consisting in a mean."* And St Thomas here follows him. But St Thomas points out that, although this is most true of the moral virtues, and also of the intellectual virtues (for our outside environment is invariably of such a kind that there is danger of excess on the one side and of defect on the other, of going too far or not going far enough), yet the axiom does not hold with regard to the theological virtues, of which the Pagans knew nothing; for we can never believe, or hope, in God too much, or love Him to excess. And if it be objected that there is such a thing as presumption, or excess of hope, and despair, or deficiency of hope, and that there are heresies against faith also which err by excess or defect, it is replied that the doctrine of the mean certainly does apply in this regard, but that the circumstances on which such application is grounded are merely accidental to the virtues themselves. Hope, considered as a mental disposition, may be called the mean between too much hope and too little. But hope in God, divine hope, if it be too much or too little, is not divine hope at all. Unlike all common and human virtues, the object of the theological virtues is God Himself, infinite truth, infinite goodness and infinite love; and there can be no such thing as going too far in our adherence to Him and our election of Him.

But even in the ordinary virtues conveniently classed under prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance, there is a divine element which is incapable of being found in excess. In so far as these virtues are copies or transcripts of the virtues of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, they know no

* Ethics II, vi.

such thing as excess. One cannot be too prudent if it is the prudence of Christ, or too strong if it is the fortitude of Christ, or too just or too temperate. The relation between these virtues and external circumstances may vary, and here we may rightly bring in the doctrine of the mean. But in their essence they are only various aspects or manifestations of the love of God above all things, and in that sense they cannot be susceptible of excess.

This consideration has led me to think that, as we cannot follow St Gregory page by page, it will be more useful to dwell on the divine side of the pastor's qualification than on the balance and adjustment of their human side. Thus, instead of following our author in striking the mean between too much speech and too much silence (chapter iv), too much sympathy with human trouble and too much contemplation of God (chapter v), too much meekness and too much sternness (chapter vi), too much external work and too much occupation with one's own interior (chapter vii), too much study to please men and too little care for appearances (chapter viii), too much correcting of others and too little (chapter x), we may rather follow out into their practical lessons for ourselves some of those deep-lying principles which we find in the course of his exposition.

The third chapter of this second book is entitled "That the pastor be always distinguished in his acts and deeds." The phrase is *actione præcipuus*, and it means that the pastor of souls should be excellent and admirable in all that he does. It is on this that the chapter insists: that a priest must excell in his whole life and conduct. No particular virtue or good quality is

here dwelt upon. The chapter is chiefly made up of a beautiful and truly Gregorian commentary on the passage in Exodus* which describes the vestments of Aaron, and especially on the ephod or super-humeral. He observes that this robe covers "both shoulders"; for the pastor must be ready and prepared for all things. *Non hunc prospera elevent, non adversa perturbent, non blanda usque ad voluptatem demulceant, non aspera ad desperationem premant.* The super-humeral is made of "gold, and violet, and purple, and scarlet twice dyed, and fine twisted linen."† Gold, because in the priest there should shine out conspicuously wisdom and intelligence—*intellectus, sapientia.* Violet, the colour of the hyacinth and of the blue sky, because he must use his intelligence not for mean purposes but for the sake of the things of heaven; not for earthly praise, but for the sake of the truth which is delivered to him. Purple, because the heart of a priest should be clad with nobility and royalty, as a son of the heavenly Father, the heir of the heavens, the princely friend of God, whom earthly temptation should find chivalrously prepared for resistance to the last extremity, and whom no adversity, no lowliness of condition or trouble of life should ever cause to forget what he is. The scarlet twice dyed is divine charity, by which the priest sanctifies all that men behold in him by the flame of interior love, *flamma amoris intimi;* twice dyed, because the priest must neither so aspire after his Creator as to neglect the care of his neighbours, nor so occupy himself with souls as to let his love of God die down. And the "fine twisted linen" means the mortification of the flesh—the white-

* Chap. xxviii. † Ib. v, 8.

ness of holy purity, preserved and enhanced by bodily self-restraint, which should run through all the pastor's life.

For consideration in this chapter we will single out St Gregory's teaching on the pastor's feeling for his fellow-men. This is contained chiefly in chapters v and vi of this second book. In the former he lays down that the pastor should be full of sympathy: *singulis compassione proximus;* alive and sensitive to the weakness of men; a man to whom the flock will have recourse as to a mother. In the latter, he reminds the shepherd of souls that all men are equal, were it not that sin has caused some to be subject to others, and that he ought to think not of his rank as a governor, but of his state or condition as a fellow-creature of each member of his flock. These lessons of sympathy and humble brotherhood correspond to what is called, in more modern time, the Love of Souls.

St Gregory is far from being a socialist, in any extreme sense. No one lays down more clearly than he does that men are by no means equal under present circumstances; no man stands up more distinctly for the claims of authority and obedience. But he wishes the pastor to remember that, as far as he is concerned, it is not owing to any merit or dignity of his own soul that he is set over other souls. Hence pastors should ponder over, not the authority of their position, but the equality of their condition: *unde cuncti qui præsunt, non in se potestatem debent ordinis sed æqualitatem pensare conditionis.*

This view—which I have called a principle—of the *equality of men* may seem to be one which

is without any far-reaching consequences on pastoral life and behaviour. But to me it is fruitful of consequences. To St Gregory, the axiom that all men are equal implied that a pastor is bound to regard men in themselves, and not as belonging to a class or condition; in themselves, and not as they happen to affect his own personality. In his day, as in the days of the Roman and the Greek civilizations, the world was made up of classes, which, if not invariably hard and fast, were deeply marked—as the irrational creation is made up of beasts, birds and fishes. The chief distinction was into freemen and slaves; but there were others, such as Roman and barbarian, soldier and peasant, prince and subject, rich and poor, which in many circumstances were almost as definite and were confined within bounds almost as difficult to pass. Caste in India is only a survival of what we see in ancient Egypt and Assyria—the establishment of essential distinctions artificially produced or invented between men and men—a state of things which has always practically denied Creation, and made redemption a most difficult doctrine to get the world to accept. It was this which led to the deifying of princes. It was this which led to the treatment of slaves—to the destruction of children—to the oppression of the poor—to the killing of prisoners, the sick and the old. The idea was, that one man or one class could possess all rights, even such as concerned life and death and morality, over certain other human beings; that what was right for one class might be wrong for another, and this even in the regions of ultimate ethics. St Gregory reminds the pastor that God said to Noe, "Let the fear and dread of you be

upon all the beasts of the earth "*; if your dread is to be over animals, he says, it is clear that there is no permission for you to extend it over your fellow-men. This is the view one is to take of souls. No man or woman in the world is intended for your convenience. They all have their own end, purpose and dignity. They are made by God Himself, each separately, each in order to belong entirely to God, each in order to be happy for all eternity. Each is redeemed by Jesus Christ; each, unless by misfortune, is the child of God and the heir of heaven. You must look at souls, therefore, impersonally; not as you see them in flesh and blood, but as they are in God's sight. St Macarius, in his Spiritual Homilies,† has a remark which connects this point curiously with what we said in the last chapter. He says that this impersonal way of looking upon men and women is the result of purity of heart. "Pastors of souls," he says, "sit as in the theatre, and see what goes on upon the stage," that is in the world; "but in their interior they converse with God." This is a very striking image. The play upon the stage should be of no concern to the pastor. We have all heard of the man at a play who became so excited against the villain as to make efforts to get at him for violent purposes. This is the mistake that some pastors of souls seem to make. They see a large variety of men, with their excellences, weaknesses, amiabilities, or disagreeablenesses, on the stage, going through their parts, and they grow as interested as if these matters made any real difference to themselves. The only thing that matters is that they are souls, to be helped and saved. But we all know how absorbed we grow, not in men's

* Genesis ix, 2. † Hom. xv.

everlasting destiny, but in the play of their characters, the tragedy or comedy of their lives, and the pleasure or inconvenience they may be expected to bring to ourselves. These things appeal to our unregenerate nature, to our affections, vanities, curiosity, selfishness. Were our hearts really pure, they would not affect us, except to cause sorrow for sin, or rejoicing because he that was lost was found.

It must not be for a moment supposed that in advocating this impersonal way of regarding immortal souls, or in saying that St Gregory lays it down, we mean that the pastor must treat his flock without any perception of difference of character. St Gregory devotes the whole of the third book to minute directions how the pastor is to deal with an immense variety of different temperaments, states and conditions. The impersonal view of men and women, which is so useful to the pastor, is quite different from the merely abstract view. No pastor is worth much if he cannot take every one of these things into consideration in every individual case. But the view here advocated does abstract from some things, and those of considerable, nay extreme, importance. The impersonal view endeavours to eliminate from the problem—not any element of the problem, but the personal tastes and temper of the pastor himself. You are not asked to forget that John is a rich man; you are only to see that the circumstance does not make you cringe to him, or bully him. You must on no account overlook the fact that James is an infidel, or a breaker of God's law; you are placed where you are in order to see to this very thing; what is expected of you is, not to despise him, or to despair of him, or

to be afraid of him. For it is our own miserable egotism that spoils our work for souls. It is of the utmost consequence that, in preparation for the priesthood, a young man should find out and as far as possible correct the personal flaws in his character which will interfere with his treating a soul as a soul. It is a mistake to suppose that these weaknesses come on after ordination. They are certainly with us now.

For instance, even in the seminary, there is the *uncertain* man. He is mutable in his views and variable in his temper. First he is eager for a thing, then he drops it. One day he is oppressively affectionate, the next he cuts you dead. The harm that a pastor of this kind does is that his work for souls has no consecutiveness; and as a house is never built unless you lay the stones one upon the other, so a variable character effects little and disgusts many. This is partly an intellectual fault, which must be understood and analysed in order to be overcome; but much can be done by resolutely trampling upon the egotistical impulse of change for change's sake, which is so often the real spring of mutability.

Then there is the *timid* character. He is morbidly afraid of giving pain. I do not know but what this leans somewhat to a virtue. But some are certainly very apt to neglect their plain duty in the fear of hurting the feelings of another. I am afraid to urge the duty of giving pain! To do some people justice, they are often extremely ready to do it. Let me say this, that, although pain can be given in many ways, the commonest way, and the way in which most faults are committed, is to give pain by unkind and bitter words. If, then, the greatest part of our endeavour be directed to the not

giving pain by words, we may both preserve charity and cultivate, without much danger, that due firmness and courage without which the life of a pastor will be of little profit.

Next, there are the *despondent*, and the easily disheartened. These men drop work when they do not see success. They leave the sinful and troublesome to themselves when there is no speedy response to their exertions. They have to learn the great secret that no prayer or labour is ever wasted, or ever fails to produce fruit in God's place and God's time. Those who are naturally despondent should take their heaviness in their hands and lay it on the floor of the garden-cave of Gethsemane, that when our Lord comes to lift His own heavy heart to His Father, their load may be lifted too—by being transformed into acceptance. Despondency does much harm in pastoral life. It is answerable for that slackness in missionary work when the priest is moping, or is consoling himself as he should not do. It can often be conquered by resolute perseverance; and a well-formed Christian character will be one which is accustomed to go on in spite of failure.

Again, there is the man of *preferences*. He may be one who is blessed, or cursed, with certain pronounced tastes, or with a one-sided disposition. Such a man will perhaps have a natural disgust for poverty, an unnamed hatred of Irish, or English, or Scotch, or will detest a Radical, despise any one who seems to pose as a gentleman, or perhaps any one who is not a gentleman, be hurt by what he calls vulgarity, or again be rather fond of it, etc., etc. Any ill-regulated taste or impulse of such a kind first urges a pastor to be more familiar and kinder with

some than with others, then turns others against him, and finally makes him the pastor of a set or a clique, instead of pastor of his flock. One of the great works of preparation is to clear our characters of bias or colour, such as may interfere with our work for souls. Exquisite balance, perfect sanity, complete sereneness of heart—these are the qualities that a pastor should have. It is said that every one of us is a little mad. Be that as it may, it is certain that many of us are peculiar. How often do we hear it said of a priest that he is a good preacher, a good administrator, a good man, but—rather queer! He has favourites; he is under somebody's thumb; he is inordinately fond of cards; he is cross to the poor; he is put out if he does not get this, that, or the other; he has violent political views. The aspirant is bound, as far as he can, not only to subjugate his views, but as far as possible to get rid of his prejudices, to tone down his tastes, to take the edge off these predilections which would not matter in a secular; and he cannot begin too soon thus to make himself perfectly sane and serene, if he is to win his future flock to Christ.

Then there is the *soft* character. The affections are a powerful force in action, in influence and in their results on this life and the next. They are not in themselves sinful, but they are the fuel of sin; a man with strong and carelessly guarded affections being like a straw heap on a summer's day left where sparks of fire are flying. In the seminary, as we find all spiritual writers laying down, friendships, love and human feeling should be carefully restrained. Why? Partly because of the danger of sensuality; but if there were no other reason for this restraint, we could

find a very strong one in the necessity for preparing for missionary work among souls. Nothing entangles the heart like love. I speak of honest and clean love. Dispositions vary enormously in this respect. Some young men are by nature cool, egotistical and indifferent; others are so loving and affectionate that their life is a continuous series of fast friendships, acute sufferings, and quarrels and renouncements, over and over again. Others again take up those that are younger and pet and spoil them. A priest who settles down on a mission with a naturally soft character unmortified, is sure to have some very disagreeable experiences. He is sure to like some people inordinately. Perhaps he takes up with young men, and falls into dissipation; perhaps he gives too much of his time to one or two; perhaps he takes to children, and gets sneered at and laughed at by people of the world for hugging and kissing little boys and girls. Perhaps he is too friendly with women—parishioners, teachers, servants—the consequence being that, even if he does no wrong, he gives scandal and makes people talk. Perhaps the sensual instinct, which is closely allied to affection, carries him very much further. I do not dwell on this. But, to put the subject on no higher level, it is not difficult to see that a young priest is easily made a fool of by his affections, unless he is accustomed to rule them by thought and reason, assisted by divine grace. Souls are God's most precious possessions and the cherished flowers of God's holy spirit. If you approach a soul with mere human liking, urged by your soft nature, you do as one who handles a delicate flower with hot, moist and clumsy hands; it is

never quite the same again. Keep off. Respect the young, and the mature. Mortify your longing for love. When you do feel affectionate liking, even in a case where there is no danger, be cautious, dignified and reserved, as becomes one who thinks first of the spiritual, and not of the sensual. Study—like a man who watches a stream in the time of rain—study the impulses of your nature. There is always a danger of the water getting over the banks. There is always the possibility, at certain times and seasons, of heavy rainfalls in the hills, that will be down upon you before you know they are coming. Study, watch, philosophize; but with prayer and the light of Christian ascetics.

It is by the patient work of years in thus correcting and disciplining our personal character that we may hope one day to take that impersonal interest in souls of which our holy Doctor speaks when he says that the pastor is to remember that he has no sort of property in souls, and that they are not made to serve him, or to amuse him, but for God.

The other principle laid down by St Gregory as to the treatment of souls is that of Compassion. "Let the pastor," he says (chapter v), "be near to every one by compassion"—*Singulis compassione proximus* (there is here a reference to the parable of the Good Samaritan; our Lord says, "Who, thinkest thou, was the neighbour—*proximus*—to him that fell among robbers?") "let him by the bowels of kindness (*per pietatis viscera*) transfer to himself the infirmity of others; let him not despise the weak things of his neighbour." Throughout the chapter he uses such phrases as *Condescensionis viscera; hunc miseratur; ad secreta infirmantium oculum*

cordis flectit. When St Paul says, "To the Jews I became as a Jew," St Gregory says that he did not renounce his faith, but widened his heart.

Compassion, or sympathy, means the feeling what another is feeling. It is a virtue which, more than any other (as even Shakspeare found out), has the peculiarity of blessing and benefiting both oneself and the one with whom one sympathizes. It is indeed a most precious gift to be able to enter into the troubles of another soul. Some people have a good deal of it by nature; these become sometimes very great pastors and missionaries. It is said of St Francis Xavier that in labouring for the salvation of souls he seemed not to act by any infused or acquired virtue, but by a natural impulse. It was the prerogative of St Francis of Sales, like it was of St Paul, to be "all to all." The Heart of Jesus at Gethsemane gathered in and gave hospitality to all the pain, sorrow and trouble of all the hearts of men. Even if we are by nature deficient in compassion, we can to a great extent acquire it. It implies three things: the appreciation of another as a soul beloved by God, the throwing ourselves out of ourselves, and the divining what is the matter. Even if a person is not very well provided with tact, and cannot always precisely enter into what another person is feeling, yet the kind goodwill that springs from unselfishness and considerateness will always have its effect. This unselfishness can, and should, be assiduously cultivated. By paying attention to it, one can get into the way of giving unobtrusive help in physical or material needs, contributing to another's ease in physical pain, relieving material necessities, etc. We

can teach ourselves not only to think of these things, but how to do them kindly and considerately. We can learn to keep from intruding upon troubles that we cannot mend. We can learn to understand *when* a person is in trouble or low spirits, and so to suit our company or conversation to his mood. We can learn to divine what hurts a person—what words, acts, jokes or omissions are disagreeable and ill-timed. We can get to know the preferences, aversions, requirements and miseries of those about us. We can learn to see when unkind words or ill-temper on the part of companions or others is really nothing but the irritation of pain or of mental annoyance. Few of us would refuse to befriend another, or even to make considerable sacrifices for him. But how often are we forgetful, cold-hearted and undiscerning! Let us attend to this. It requires an effort in order habitually to make this "self" of ours stand on one side. Few of us would deliberately say of a neighbour or companion, "His troubles are nothing to me." But many of us, absorbed in self, pass our neighbours by. Let us notice, observe, consider. Our selfishness must often strike us with a certain dismay. It happens that we are alone, or, again, in company—in chapel, in class, in recreation, in social intercourse. If we suddenly turn our looks upon our own hearts, what do we almost invariably find? We find we are occupied with our "self." If alone, we are working for ourselves, perhaps praying for ourselves, anxious about our own relations with God (which is far from being blameworthy, as far as it goes), perhaps forming plans and building castles in which self figures conspicuously. When we have to mix with others we come among them pre-occupied with

our own concerns, hoping for success, expecting pleasure, apprehensive of rivalry, nervous about possible annoyance, or prepared to strive and struggle for our rights, our credit, our satisfaction.

There are some people who, after sickness or agitation of mind, are startled by the sight of their own face in the glass. "Can this be me? What have I been doing with myself?" Is there not something of a similar surprise and disgust when we suddenly catch ourselves so intent and absorbed in our own precious self? In heaven's name what am I doing? Here am I in the midst of souls dear to God, precious in His sight, immortal; and I am behaving as if there were no one in existence but myself! Every one of these souls has its own separate life, hopes, fears, joys, troubles; and yet for all that I heed them they might be unresponsive beasts, or clods of earth! For each of these immortal souls I am in some degree responsible, were it only that I am among them and live before their eyes—yet I have never considered them or interested myself in them! Nay, it is worse. For I am ready to act aggressively towards them; ready to assert myself, to fight, to grasp, to flout, to sneer—careless who is hurt, who stumbles, who suffers, who is defiled, whose union with God is affected, or in whose soul the Holy Spirit is hindered and contristated.

A reflective view of this kind is enough to make any one who loves Jesus Christ ashamed and contrite. "What can I do for the souls around me?" is an aspiration which should take its rise in our contemplation of the Cross and the Sacred Heart, and should grow into a strong practical bias, as we are admitted more

closely into the inner courts of the spiritual life. There is nothing that will make more devoted priests. In the seminary, among students, it need not be said that our action is, and should be, restricted. You are not called upon to shepherd your fellow-students. All such exercises of charity as exhortation, correction, and good advice require the greatest prudence and discretion. Even the display of kind interest and sympathy in difficulties, sufferings or trouble, has to be carefully controlled, between equals, according to character and circumstances. But there are three practices which are excellent. First, we should show the negative side of sympathy, by abstaining from anything that can hurt the feelings, especially in the case of the sensitive or suffering. Secondly, we should reduce our own self-assertion to the lowest possible figure, and strain out of our character all aggressiveness, in matters of rights, claims, credit, place and gratification, whether in class, in recreation, or in conversation. And, thirdly, we should try to please others; that is, we should think what will help or recreate others, what will make a morose man smile, rest an overworked one, draw out of himself an anxious one, promote general cheerfulness, and at the same time keep up the standard of a God-fearing life. All this will be done by a heart which cultivates divine compassion. It will be done unobtrusively, as all the best work is. There need be no formal announcement that we are going to begin. When spring comes, it is not proclaimed in the newspapers or advertised on the walls. But insensibly the days lengthen, the sun gains power, the winterly winds feel the breath of the south, the earth softens, and there creeps out and grows everywhere the genial

warmth of quickening life. This is the effect, in the kingdom of God, of the exercise of holy compassion. And not the least part of the effect will be upon him who forms himself to practise it. The very effort to be unselfish and really kind to another confers upon him who makes it the *spirit of cheerfulness*, in a degree that nothing else can do. Let those who complain of depression, sadness and discouragement, just try what it is to trample on self and to think what one can do for other people. Nothing will more effectually loosen the hump or pack upon their own backs and send it rolling down the hill. And when they have the care of souls, their compassionate and sympathetic hearts will draw the sinner, and the suffering, and the poor and the unbelievers. The tempted, as St Gregory here says, will come to such a pastor like children to the bosom of their mother. St Gregory, in this fifth chapter, seems undoubtedly to refer to the sacrament of penance, and to confession. The confessional of such a priest will be loved, and genuine confessions and sincere conversions will reward him. And St Gregory says in conclusion that if a priest of this kind is tempted by what he sees and hears, and his own purity seems likely to suffer, he need not fear; for God, who sees everything, will deliver him from his own temptations for the sake of his pity and compassion for the temptations of others.

CHAPTER V

Seminary Life

THE first Book of the "Regula Pastoralis" is taken up with an exposition of the principles which should guide a man in preparing himself for the *regimen animarum*—the care of immortal souls. We have considered what St Gregory says on the subjects of vocation, conversion, purity of heart, etc. We may now consider what principles he lays down as to that modern fashion of training candidates for the priesthood, established or enforced in the Church by the Council of Trent, and carried out by the bishops during the last three hundred and fifty years. I mean Ecclesiastical Seminaries.

It need not be said that in the days of St Gregory the arrangements for a special training of the younger clergy were not organized as they are now, and as they have been since the Council of Trent. Neither was there anything like the same need of such organization. First of all, the work of preaching and pastoral exhortation was chiefly in the hands of the bishops. It is true the beginnings of the parochial system were already clearly discernible, in Italy at least. But the district priests themselves were elderly men —the age of thirty being the general age for ordination. Priestly life between the middle of the fourth century and St Gregory's day (A.D. 601) seems to have shewn a tendency to two distinct kinds or types. There was on the one hand the bishop with his *familia*—his presbyters, deacons and inferior clerics, all living together,

either under one roof or in houses within the city. On the other hand there was the single priest, living with his relations, or sometimes with a cleric or two, serving a church in the country. Of this latter type of priest we have many traits in the four books of the "Dialogues" of St Gregory himself. It is evident that such training as there was would, as a rule, have to be given in the houses of the bishops. As a fact, we find that this was so. In the writings of the Fathers from A.D. 400 to 600 there are numerous allusions to the *familia* of the bishop, and to the instruction given to the younger clergy, in the great sees of Rome, Milan, Ravenna, Tours, Orleans, Poitiers, Arles, etc. Even in the houses of detached priests, in districts which might be called "country," before the end of the sixth century, there was beginning to be recognized the advantage of each priest undertaking to train those younger than himself. The first Canon of the Council of Vaison (in vico Vasensi) held in 529, probably by St Cæsarius of Arles, enjoins all priests of parishes to receive into their houses young Lectors, in order to instruct them in the Psalms (*psalmos parare*), in the lessons of the Church and in the divine law, and thus prepare skilled successors for themselves. The Council adds that this salutary custom had already been introduced throughout the whole of Italy. It must also be remarked that, in those days, there was not so much to learn. Dogmatic theology was not digested in treatises; it consisted of the "Credo" and the Canons of Nicæa and Constantinople. Canon Law was only just showing above the ground. Dionysius Exiguus, who formed what may be termed the earliest collection of "Canons" in the West, was a Roman abbot, and

flourished about 529. Nevertheless, even before this date, it was the custom for the Sovereign Pontiffs and others to publish collections, more or less complete, of the decrees of the Councils. In his celebrated dogmatic letter to Flavius, Pope Leo the Great (A.D. 440) speaks of the decrees of Nicæa "thereto appended." There seems to have been a more or less recognized order and arrangement of dogmatic decrees and canons, which is frequently alluded to as the Τάξις καὶ ἀκολουθία τῶν κανόνων, the ἀκολουθία ἐκκλησιαστίκη, the ἀριθμῶν ἀκολουθίαι. Such collections and "sequences" would have to be learnt by the cleric of the sixth century, but the task would not be severe.

As for casuistry, that also was only studied in its elements. There are many passages in St Gregory which would indicate that a priest was prepared to hear confessions. There cannot be the least doubt that, long before St Gregory's day, although public confession might be more common, yet private confession was practised also. The authority of St Leo the Great's decretals would suffice to prove this, even if we had no other. As I have said, no one can read St Gregory's chapter on "Compassion" (Reg. Past., p. ii, cap. 5) without being convinced that he is thinking of confession. We have there the picture of a pastor so full of pity that "his people are not ashamed to manifest to him their hidden things"; that "the tempted have recourse to him as to a mother's bosom"; that "the defiled are cleansed by his words of exhortation and their own prayer"; "a pastor who is always ready in his patient condescension to wash away the sins which his flock confess to him." To be fitted to exercise a ministry of this kind, the

pastor must know what is wrong and what is right. He must be able, as St Gregory says in a previous chapter, (p. ii, cap. 2), "to discriminate thoroughly between good and bad"—*subtili semper examine bona malaque discernere.* But it was not to be till centuries later that this discrimination was to be carried out, or even attempted, on anything like the scale of modern moral theology. The development of casuistry has followed the development of self-consciousness. If even in our own days, among the unreading and uneducated, self-examination is extremely rare and very difficult when it is attempted, and if in such cases the confessor knows that on that account the material integrity of the confession cannot and ought not always to be insisted upon, how much more true must it have been that in the sixth century the mass of the faithful in the western Church did not require pastors who had mastered all the case-learning of the divines of our own day?

It is true, questions were asked, and questions had to be answered. In the canons of the Western Councils held in various parts of Europe during the sixth and seventh centuries, we meet five or six cases which are constantly recurring, and which are invariably solved in practically identical words. It is easy to see that the original solution comes from the see of Rome. And for an extended specimen of the application of the divine law to new circumstances, what can be more instructive than the replies of St Gregory himself to the questions of St Augustine? We have, in this most remarkable document, an example of moral theology in the process of making. Henceforward, no divine who presumed to instruct others could ignore so clear a pronouncement of the doctor of doctors; it would have to

be added to the canons, or the sequence, or the decretals, by whatever name they might be called, and the Church's clergy would have to learn it. But at the end of the sixth century the documentary matter of the young Church student might have been contained in a very small enchiridion indeed. Something of the kind might be said of Church history. The annals of Christianity, in the sixth century, necessarily stopped short at the sixth century.

But there was one subject of study which was as wide-reaching and as difficult to master completely as it is in our day—and that was the study of the sacred Scripture. It is needless to discuss whether modern appliances make the study of the Bible longer or shorter. Nor is it necessary to insist upon the difference between the sixth century and the twentieth. It is sufficient to point out that never, at any period, was the study of God's word more insisted upon than at the time we are considering. Without going outside the covers of the "Regula Pastoralis" we can discover St Gregory's view. Take only chapter eleven of part two. The great means, says the holy pontiff, of becoming a good pastor, as laid down in this second part, is "to meditate daily with deep attention on the word of God"—*studiose quotidie sacri eloquii præcepta meditetur.* The heart which too easily falls into dissipation by human speech, must ever strive to rise again by what he calls the *studium eruditionis*—zeal in learning the Bible. *Dum venio, attende lectioni*, says St Paul (1 Tim. iv, 13). The pastors of the Church must always cleave to the instructions of the sacred volume—*instructioni sacrorum voluminum semper inhærentes.* Those who exercise the office of preaching, must never intermit the

zealous reading of holy writ—*a sacræ lectionis studio non recedant.* They must ever be ready to answer questions. It is exceedingly ignominious to have to set to work to learn when we should be prepared and ready to answer inquiries. The still existing commentaries of the great fathers and doctors show how the study here indicated was carried out. The clergy in those days found everything in the Bible—theology, philosophy, morals and devotion. This "Regula Pastoralis" has as many citations from holy Scripture as there are daisies in the grass in May. And if at times the sense of the sacred word seems forced or far-fetched, who would dare to insist on this when it is an Origen, an Augustine, an Ambrose or a Gregory who is speaking, and uttering, it may be, the authoritative tradition of the Catholic Church, or writing under the guidance of the Holy Spirit?

The young cleric of the sixth century, therefore, had to go through an intellectual training similar in kind to that which he receives in our own days, although differing in many accidental circumstances.

As for his spiritual preparation, we have it described by St Gregory in considerable detail. If you will refer to the tenth chapter of the first book you will find it headed, *Qualis quisque ad regimen venire debeat*—What sort of man a priest should be when he takes up the care of souls. He sets down twelve marks or qualifications—He must be a mortified man; he must have the virtue of indifference; he must be a spiritual man; his body must be fairly healthy; he must be humble; he must be detached from money; he must combine gentleness and compassion with firmness and justice; he must be blameless

in his conduct; he must be a model to others; he must be well able to teach and exhort his flock; he must be practised and experienced in prayer; and he must be full of trust in God. In the following chapter the holy doctor states what a pastor should not be. He should not be blind —that is, devoid of the light of supernal contemplation; in other words, a stranger to interior prayer. He should not be lame—that is, remiss and slothful, knowing what he ought to do, but omitting to carry it out. He ought not to be either too simple or too subtle, nor solicitous for earthly things, nor worldly, nor carnal, nor avaricious.

Such is St Gregory's description of what a pastor ought to be before he dares to assume responsibility for the souls of others. It is clear that such a preparation presupposes a long and systematic training. Just as the young ecclesiastic, in the house of his bishop or of his senior priest, would have to give himself to the study of the subjects of which we spoke just now, so he would have to learn to pray, to mortify himself, to subdue passion, and to practise virtue.

Thus the education of the ministers of the New Testament has in every age and country been in all essential points the same. If in these days there seems more formality, a larger number of rules, stricter organization, and a longer course, this has come about by the natural development of things. In these days there is more to learn; there is a greater strain for the Church to hold her own against the world in all matters of learning and personal character; there is the systematized experience of so many centuries; and the Church herself is more widespread and more

strongly organized in all that concerns her mission to the world.

Neglecting for the moment the intellectual side of this preparation, we may consider seminary life under three heads: spiritual training, rules, and mutual influence.

1. As to spiritual training, I would first observe that a theoretical, or quasi-scientific, knowledge of human nature, considered in reference to its union with almighty God, is absolutely necessary, not only for guiding others, but for one's own advancement. Ascetical theology* is somewhat unfortunately named, for it is a term which seems to threaten the plain and ordinary Christian with vague fancies and intangible speculations. But it really means nothing more than the orderly discussion of the soul, its powers and its acts, in so far as it seeks God by faith and love. I grant that ascetical theology has its mysteries; but this is because the infinite love of God for His creatures urges Him to communicate Himself to them, even in this life, in wonderful and ineffable ways. But there is a vast region of this science which deals with what may be called the normal relations between God and the soul. These, although in discussing them we find ourselves ever on the threshold of mystery, may be described, studied, and to a considerable extent even comprehended. Not to know something about them is to run the risk in our spiritual concerns of the evils which the uneducated person incurs in worldly matters: it is to make ourselves liable to many mistakes, to fail in appreciating the importance of large fields of interest, and to condemn ourselves to live on a low spiritual level all our lives. For example, a young

* Sometimes called mystical theology.

man who is beginning to understand how serious a thing human existence is, will be all the better for knowing what is exactly meant by that word "Perfection," which denominates what he is told to aim at. Again, he may know in a way what divine Grace is, but it will help him if he studies with more accuracy its wonders, its varieties and its fruits. He may think, as a classical scholar, tha the can construe the Latin word *virtus*; but the moment he begins to consider what Christian virtue is, he finds himself wandering in a wide and difficult country. In his course of rhetoric he may have studied the "passions"; but he soon comes to understand that it is just as difficult a matter to know how to subdue them in your own breast as it is to raise them by your eloquence in the breasts of others. He easily comes to realize how much there is to know about sin, mortal and venial—about temptation, repentance and reformation. He is helped by that quaint division of spiritual condition into purgative, illuminative and unitive; for these words indicate how a soul may advance and progress in its nearness to God, and yet all the time be indefinitely far from what God has in reserve for the souls that give themselves wholly to Him; how one may be good, and even spiritual, and yet never attain to all that God would give; and therefore how the way of perfection is at once within our power to follow, and yet endless; delightful, yet ever demanding fresh exertion; giving God to our souls, yet letting us feel more clearly at every onward step how great and rich and boundless He is.

It is of matters such as these—the soul's spiritual aims, the gifts that come to her through Christ's redeeming blood, the working out of

salvation, the perils and failures which beset man in his probation, and the constant nearness and visitation of the Holy Spirit—that the science of ascetical and mystical theology undertakes to treat. It teaches the beginner, who is just stepping over the threshold of manhood, what that purpose is to which he must direct his life, and what is the road he is to follow. For he cannot escape the obligation that lies upon him to seek that "perfection" which our Lord commands him to seek. "Be ye perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. v, 48). I am not asserting that this command refers to absolute perfection. It would be false, and even absurd, to suppose that we were to aim at being as perfect as the only Good, the only Perfect. Perfection in the moral order is relative. It includes three elements: to prefer God to any creature whatsoever, to do this without serious interruption, and to make use of such means, in the way of renunciations or practices, as will secure such continuousness and intensity. Thus, in the perfect life there will be many degrees, and absolute perfection will be unattainable. But it will be always a different thing from that half-earnest, intermittent, tepid and self-indulgent service of God, which is so much the ordinary rule among Christians. And to this kind of perfection, or excellence of life, a man who undertakes the care of souls is bound to aspire on account of his very office. A priest who is not exemplary and perfect after the manner demanded by his priesthood may well fear for himself. This is true even of a priest who has no care of souls; it is enough that he is a priest—nay, that he is in holy orders—to make it obligatory upon him *ex officio* to take his share in saving souls, at

least by example and by prayer. A student, therefore, will do well to follow with zeal and interest the course of instructions in asceticism and in the theology of the spirit. His chief object in doing so will be to discipline his own character, and to draw by constant degrees nearer to God. But he will also learn much that will help him when hereafter he has to deal with the souls of others.

2. As regards the Rules of the seminary, it is evident that the obligation to observe them rests on two grounds, either of which would be sufficient to make it wrong, speaking generally, to infringe them. First, there is the general good, and indeed the very existence, of the seminary itself. No community can exist—much less can it exist prosperously—without common rule. All such rules, therefore, as touch the seminary as a seminary—that is, as an institution for the good education of persons destined to the priesthood—are implicitly accepted as obligatory by all who enter. Thus rules as to chapel, schools, the refectory, going out, communication with externs, and the like, must be, speaking generally, binding. Any gross or repeated violation of such rules must be sinful in the sight of God. And such violation, if its results were grave, would be a grievous sin, not only of scandal, but also against religion, that is, against the Church of God and the service of God.

The second ground on which the rules oblige is that of obedience. All persons *in statu pupillari* are bound to obey their parents, superiors and masters; all persons who are tonsured as long as they have not renounced the ecclesiastical state, and *a fortiori* all who are in holy orders, are bound to obey the constituted ecclesiastical

authorities. The rules of the seminary are therefore binding; and so are the rules that are made from time to time by the superiors of the house in their various offices. Hence it is sinful to uphold as a principle that there is no such thing as binding moral obligation in the rules of a seminary. It is also sinful, and a sin against obedience, to violate them in grave matters, or with a persistence which causes grave results in the house.*

As to the obligation of single rules in single instances, it is true that such infringements, except in grave matters, are, on the one hand, not of any importance as far as the house is concerned, and, on the other, not looked upon by superiors as sins against the obedience which is due to them. In itself, therefore, the breaking of an ordinary rule would not be a sin. But we must remember that a rule is seldom broken except through sloth, vanity, self-indulgence, temper, malice, or some such evil impulse. Such sins are at least venial sins or imperfections.

But the aspirant to the holy priesthood should take a higher view of the rules of his seminary. They are, indeed, not fetters to bind his liberty, but steps or occasions to deepen his purity of heart and his love of his heavenly Father. In themselves they are wise and useful, tending to the well-being of each individual. Even, therefore, if they carried no obligation, it would be the part of a true servant of God to observe them religiously. Obedience is the most essential virtue of a heart which aspires to imitate Jesus Christ; a real, interior obedience, not merely external,

* Superioribus omnes et singuli debitam obedientiam et observantiam omnino præstent (Acta Eccl. Mediolan. De Sem. inst., III, iii).

but grounded upon genuine humility of heart. It is obedience which most effectively clothes the spirit with the mind and temper of Christ. It is obedience which has the promise of victory over passion and of success in the ministry of souls. To promote and to deepen in the character the spirit of obedience is certainly one of the principal purposes of the training of a priest.* Many church students do not understand this. There is a disposition, always common in the world, but perhaps more strongly rooted in the young at the present time than ever it has been before, to cherish and cultivate what is called independence. There are many charms in independence, and not the least subtle and seductive of them is that interior complacency which exists in the heart even when outward compliance is given to rule and outward respect to superiors; a kind of pride which feels gratification in withholding all submission of the spirit; in giving to discipline no more than the letter demands; in acknowledging no intrusion into the sacred domain of a self-sufficing personality. It is this kind of tone that is forced upon one's notice in the universities, in the army, and indeed in every profession and business. A man obeys because he is paid, or he has made an engagement, or his promotion depends upon it; but whilst he obeys, he does not pretend to want to obey; he looks upon obedience as a part of that inconvenience which is the price of getting on in this world; he considers it no harm to feel and express his disgust and detestation, and often goes so far as to hate and re-

* Nihil tam expedit animæ quam obedire (S. Augustinus in Ps. lxx, conc. 2).

(Obedientia est) sola virtus quæ virtutes cæteras menti inserit, insertasque custodit (S. Greg. Moral. xxxv, 10).

vile his superiors. This spirit, which is fatal to all spirituality of character, can only be beaten out of the field by the true Gospel humility, and the lowliness of heart which Jesus has set before us for imitation. Hence the value of a life of "rule"; for such a life is, or should be, the outward expression and stimulus of obedient humility. A life of "rule," therefore, which is accepted and loved, is the very best preparation for the priesthood, because it is the very best discipline of a truly Christ-like mind, and the most effective instrument for acquiring perfection.

3. In the third place, the effects upon the spiritual and moral character, of living in such a community as is found in a seminary are very far-reaching. There are some virtues which can only be learnt by coming into contact with other human beings. The hermit, so far as his solitude is absolute, can never practise kindness, or considerateness, or that species of patience which is required in dealing with one's fellow-men. A priest who had gone through his course in private, or lived during his youth as his own master, without companions, would be under similar disadvantages. One never knows how selfish, how impatient, how irritable one really is until an occasion occurs when one is expected to give and take in community life. That sympathetic kindness, the cultivation of which is so important if we are to succeed in winning old and young to religion and to Christ, remains latent, or stunted, unless it is exercised during the years of growth and assimilation. That considerateness, that gentleness, that patience, which constitute the outward form and feature of holiness, and which have the special prerogative of preventing sin in others and putting an end to it, can only come to ma-

turity by assiduous watchfulness and continual practice. It is in a community life that one comes to understand how fatal and lasting are words of bitterness; how a phrase that hurts is hardly ever forgotten; how a wound from a stinging tongue is hardly ever thoroughly healed. It is among companions that we learn the hollowness and emptiness of wrangling disputes—the folly of arguing with our tempers instead of our judgements and our convictions. It is from repeated mishaps in friendly controversy that we come to distrust our own opinions; and it is from the general experience of candid expression and rough but not unkindly criticism that our ingrained vanity learns useful lessons and our natural conceit is toned down until it is at least tolerable. Community life makes us feel that a man's true value is what he is morally and intellectually, and not what he has by birth or accident. Community life encourages a healthy emulation—such emulation as most of us require in order to stimulate us to the adequate exertion of such powers as we possess; whilst at the same time anything like ambition, jealousy or un-Christian rivalry is contrary to the whole spirit of the place. Thus a man learns to place before himself high aims and worthy ideals, and yet to subordinate all his work to the greater glory of God. He learns to exert himself and to work strenuously, and yet to avoid the evils, moral and physical, of feverish competition.

I might dwell on the pleasant companionships which take their rise in the seminary and frequently last through life; on the happy memories that those years of wholesome work and youthful endeavour so often leave behind; on the family feeling created by the class-room, the

chapel, the music, the recreations—a feeling which tells on the future career of most of us, reinforcing our good purposes and steadying us when there is temptation to forget the sanctity of our vocation.

Neither is the practical experience that a young man picks up in the seminary to be despised. As an ecclesiastic is not to spend his life in a cell, absorbed in abstract study, but must look forward to dealing with men, and with matters material and financial, it is never too soon to begin one's initiation into the arts of the eye and the hand. The students are rightly encouraged to manage many details of daily life by their own officers. Many come to know something of money matters. There is sacristy work—a very wide and useful department—a knowledge of which may save money, time and friction in the hereafter. There is the art of playing musical instruments, and especially of the organ—an experience which will help a priest with his choir and furnish him with happy and blameless recreation. There is drawing, sketching, painting, photography, bookbinding—all of them capable of being made useful, and all assisting in that education of the hand and eye, the absence of which so frequently leaves the priest a prey to tradesmen, advertisers and interested advisers of one kind or another. Indeed, any art or mechanical skill or first-hand acquaintance with natural objects, with commercial products, or with building materials—in short, technical education in its widest extent—will help in the making of a man, and enable him to be of greater use in the priestly office. The only caution to be given is, that these things should be kept in their proper place, and should not interfere with the direct and primary

purpose of a priest's education, or absorb a young man's interest to the injury of his more important studies.

St Bernard says: *Disciplina, et socialis vita donum gratiæ est.** Discipleship and community life are gifts of divine grace. May all those who are aspiring to the priesthood and striving to fit themselves for the Eucharistic ministry and the care of immortal souls understand how abundantly they are blessed by God in being admitted to the advantages of an ecclesiastical seminary.

CHAPTER VI

The Principles of Study

ALTHOUGH in the "Regula Pastoralis" there is nothing that is addressed directly to those who are studying for the priesthood, yet, as we have seen, it is full of inspiration for such students. The pages are intended for pastors; for those who are mature in age, venerable by authority and burdened with grave responsibility. But, just as a mechanician may learn much by taking to pieces a machine which was by no means made with the object of teaching, so when we study the precepts laid down by this great pastor for pastors, we are able, by tracing things to their source, by making a slight use of inference, and by reading between the lines, to make out what St Gregory would have said, had he been speaking to ecclesiastical students. To try to do this, as we have done already, and as we propose to carry further in this present chapter, is a most useful exercise. For in St Gregory, and notably

* "De diversis," 92, n. 2.

in this "Regula Pastoralis," we have placed before us an ideal. We have the deliberately weighed words—*omne quod penso*—of one of the great fathers and doctors. From him, living as he did in times far other than our own, we do not look for such practical advice and such working details as every day study requires in this century in which we live. But whilst we inquire into such details and examine for ourselves what, as students, we should be, and what we should do, it is of sovereign advantage that we have before us a picture of the pastoral life in its essentials—that we have a description, which at no time and in no country can ever be wrong or inadequate, and which therefore can never need to be corrected, much less superseded. This is what we gain by reading the Fathers of the Church. Their writings, no doubt, are seldom easy reading, and not always attractive on the surface. They belong to ancient centuries, and to countries very different from our own. They are full of things that are not very interesting—that much may be confessed; either in manner, or in matter, they are sometimes fatiguing. The greater ones, it is true, are not only fathers and doctors, but men of genius, whose words are impressive on all who are fitted to receive them, whatever be the century. But even if we made a more liberal allowance for what is tough or tedious in the fathers, there is one thing we find in them and nowhere else—a literary exposition of Catholic doctrine and morality that we are quite sure is orthodox to its very roots. Dogmatic decrees, catechisms, definitions, disputations—these we have in other quarters. But the inestimable advantage of hearing our religion put into words by a man with a personality, a style

and a distinction of his own, and yet all the time of being secure that his distinctive character will not draw him into differing with the true tradition, nor his style disturb the safe truth, nor his personality push him into any mere advertisement of his private views of revelation—this you can have virtually nowhere except in the Fathers of the Church.

In what is here to be said, therefore, we shall be like persons using a plumb line to keep a wall perpendicular as it rises stone upon stone. We shall go into some details, but we shall ever and anon correct ourselves by noting whether our exhortation or our practice would lead us up to St Gregory's ideal, or to something which is different.

The Study of Elements

ST GREGORY, in chapter forty of the third Part of the "Regula Pastoralis," alludes to a certain chapter in Exodus (xxi, 33) wherein the law of Moses prescribes that if any one dig a well and cover it not up, he shall make compensation to any one whose ox or ass shall fall into it. The work of digging a cistern is used by the holy doctor to symbolize the acquisition of learning by the pastor. This, in fact, is what the student has to do during his course of ecclesiastical study—to dig a well. He has to break the ground, to work his way laboriously down till he finds water, and it is only at the end of some hard work that he comes to be able to count upon a perennial supply. This work of digging may be described as *the study of elements*.

The elements of knowledge are the primary component parts of knowledge. They are the bricks, blocks and beams of which a building

is made. The elements of a language, or of a science, are, however of a somewhat different description from the elements of ecclesiastical knowledge. These latter may be classed under four heads: (1) Philosophical terms and theory; (2) dogmatic definition; (3) ethical principles; and (4) history. These subjects virtually make up the work of the student during his years of study. I am anxious that all should understand how absolutely essential to anything like adequate priestly knowledge is the labour of mastering these elements. I call the seminary course elements—and no more. The mastering of it does not make a man a philosopher, or a theologian, or a preacher. That is the after-work of life. It is the work of the continual exercise of those faculties of reason, judgement, imagination, comparison and relation as brought to bear upon what is observed and heard, and as adapted to the various uses and needs of intellectual and moral human life.

The necessity of thorough elementary study to a church student arises first of all from the fact that the years of his philosophy and divinity are virtually the very opening of his powers and the beginning of serious intellectual work. Even if we admit, as I do most unreservedly, the usefulness, as a training, of the grammar, rhetoric and mathematics which he studied in his childhood, yet it is certain that, partly because a church student is no longer a mere boy, and partly because he has now, as it were, adopted a career and given himself an aim and a calling in life, his church studies mark a real epoch—a true commencement, in his intellectual history. Up to this moment some of his most essential human faculties have been relatively unexercised and dormant. His faculty of atten-

tion, his memory, his power of comparison, his capacity for inference, and that most important gift, the faculty of using the imagination as a vehicle for intellectual ideas—all these, it is true, have been gradually strengthening since his infancy. But now, in the new circumstances, they may justly be said to come into play for the first time. Naturally they are like blunt tools, or like the hands and the feet of a child—slow, inexpert and ineffective. To train them aright, too hard tasks must not be set them at first. They must be led from the simple to the composite, from the easier abstractions to the higher, from the foundations to the superstructure, from the slow practice of solid and strong stepping to the rapid movement of intellectual flight. The mere continued exercise, for the four or five years of the course, will develop them, at that docile age, in all the agility and strength that may be required. But if it should happen that a youth gets only what is called a poor course—more especially if that has been owing to his own indolence or frivolity—then it may be put down as certain that the powers of which I here speak will be permanently stunted. These four or five years will never come again. After his ordination all the surroundings will be different. He will then have to be what he must, not what, from the point of view of training, he ought. He will be emancipated from pressure, from rule, from direction. He may take a turn and try to train himself; but the probability is that he will be a poor creature to the end of his career, incapable of sustained thought, never ready with an idea or a fact, looking upon scientific theology as a pedantic accomplishment instead of seeing that it is an education, professing to admire the penny

catechism, which he is quite unable to comment upon, lauding common-sense, which with him really means narrowness and laziness, utterly unskilled in that development of an idea, or that telling arrangement of matter, without which a sermon is a tissue of crudeness and of incoherence, spending his leisure, and more than he has a right to call his leisure, in newspapers and light reading. This is no exaggeration; and these things are the consequence of deficient elementary mental training.

But there is another set o consequences equally inconvenient. A priest is not expected to have made himself, during his ecclesiastical studies, a perfect theologian, or an accomplished director, or a finished preacher. But it is true, nevertheless, that neglect of what I here call *elements* has in most cases a permanent and disastrous influence upon his success in all these characters. A man is never comfortable when he knows he has never learnt to spell. A man is never accurate in calculation when he has never learnt the simple rules of arithmetic. A man is never safe or trustworthy as a teacher of religion who has left wide gaps in his acquisition of fundamental and primary knowledge. Such a man may have the sense to feel his own deficiency. Then he is timid, inclined to shirk his duty as an adviser or a father, vague in his teaching, and ever suspecting that some one or other may have found him out and is laughing at him. If he has no such feeling of deficiency it is much worse; for he makes mistakes, says foolish things, is carried away by half views and inadequate generalizations, misunderstands the more difficult questions, and not infrequently advocates what is erroneous

in religion, or goes near to ruining souls by laxity or undue severity.

Thus it would clearly appear that a neglect of elements is a neglect that is irreparable. For, if we observe, first, every neglect of training is irreparable; because in every life, career or existence of a living subject there is one period, and one only, when training can be effectively carried out—a period that must neither be too early nor too late; a period which may have to be somewhat cut short, or which may be to a certain degree profitably lengthened out, but which cannot be transferred to another time of life. And, secondly, the neglect of elementary information during this period is irreparable, not absolutely speaking, but morally; for here again time will not stand still; opportunities will not repeat themselves; the working and fighting period of a man's life comes as surely as he lives, and occupation, hurry, responsibility, maturity, dignity, self-consciousness, all combine to hinder him from any more stooping down to pick up the little bits that are wanting to enable him to piece together his work, to make out and to give to the world what the world should have, and what his heavenly Father desires.*

Industry

I MAY next point out that if the acquisition of elements and the time of elementary study are of such surpassing importance, it follows that a student ought to understand and to carry out what is meant by Industry. I do not know any

* Pigris, itaque, intimandum est, quod sæpe dum opportune agere quæ possumus, nolumus; paulo post dum volumus, non valemus.—P. III, ch. 15. Pigredo immittit soporem, et anima dissoluta esuriĕt,—Prov. xix, 15.

better word to express in English that condition of sustained and regulated effort which ought to characterize the student.

Industry, according to Aristotle in the Ethics, is a part of the cardinal virtue of prudence—that virtue which uses means to obtain an end. I should analyse the virtue of Industry into four constituents.

The first would be a serious view of one's position and work as a student. There are some Church students who are very childish. They pass from ordinary college work, with its boyish amusements, to the work of young men—I mean to philosophy and divinity—without changing their tastes and ideas. This may, to some extent, be unavoidable. But look at the difference which there often is between a young man who has passed into Philosophy from the school, and one who has come in after a skirmish or two with the world. The latter understands that a man's work is serious work: he knows that you cannot even make sure of your bread unless you take hold of every opportunity; he knows the value of one year of time; he has no taste for boyish nonsense, though he may admire it; the follies, the fancies, the quarrels and the friendships of children have passed away, as far as he is concerned, and if his work is to be lightened it must be with recreations of a different kind. Such a student may be too serious; not infrequently he is too serious. But it is rather the opposite temperament we have to dread: the frivolousness of youth; the disposition to shirk study; the idea that books are dry, classes tedious, and teachers task-masters; the constant reversion to delicious idleness; the anxious look-out for "play"; and the genuine schoolboy feeling that there is no

horizon beyond the next holidays. Unless a youth is so far sobered as to have put away some of these things, he has not that serious view of his dawning life which is the first element of Industry.

The second is, a certain determination of the will, which is independent of external stimulus. I will not say that the typical boy never studies except so far as he is compelled by fear of inconvenience, by emulation, or (now and then) by a certain feeling of being interested. But it is true that these motives have a large share, over and above a certain sense of duty, in urging him to work. What is wanted in a "philosopher" and a divinity student, besides an increased sense of duty, is a manly energy of will-power. There is an expression of Origen's which I once came across which seems admirable—"Stringe mentem." The word means to "draw tight," as if bending a bow. This is what a nature which possesses true manliness will endeavour to do. As study is his work, to study he must be determined. He says: "I ought to study; I must study or spoil my vocation; therefore, with God's help, I *will* study. My life has begun; no more irresponsible loitering; no more romping through life only half awake to what life is; no more lying in the sun, blissfully unconscious of stern reality; from this time forth I must take myself in hand and face my work."

The third element in Industry is a steady use of ordinary means. That is to say, a student should avoid or postpone heroic resolutions, but be very assiduous in taking advantage of all the lessons, lectures and arrangements which are offered to him. To follow the course, to know the lesson of the day, to employ each hour in its

own work, to master thoroughly each lesson, to keep one's efforts on the subject of the moment, as an artist keeps to his task till it is really finished—this is industry well directed. But to disregard the course, either from indolence or self-sufficiency, to go from book to book, to merely read instead of analysing and reflecting, to rush off in pursuit of what is attractive but inopportune, to loiter in all sorts of by-paths with the idea that one is original, whereas one is merely losing one's time—all this is the very reverse of genuine industry.

And finally Industry means the avoidance of distraction. Let me explain that by this I mean the avoidance of anything which so excites or preoccupies the head and the heart as to prevent due attention to the ordinary work of study. There are kinds of work and of recreation which are good, but which are not good for students. For example, it would not be well that a young student should be mixed up with the procurator's work, except such as was merely clerk's work and of slight extent. Neither should a student of divinity give much of his time to classics or mathematics; nor should he indulge a propensity for verse-making. Light literature, if pursued with eagerness—and it has a strong attraction for some characters—is also a decided distraction, especially novel-reading. I speak of only the best novels, and I cannot but think that when a boy has got beyond those mere tales of peril and blood of which he is fond in his tender years, and can relish the novel strictly so called, a very decided line should be drawn. Novels may be not only innocent but useful; but they are for holiday-times, not for the terms of study. To mature minds they may be valuable, as

affording relief from over-work, and bringing forgetfulness in mental strain or anxiety; but for students they are too absorbing; they occupy the attention, crowd the memory, and excite the imagination; and they accordingly predispose the mind to pay slight attention to the high but austere themes of philosophy, human and divine.

This word "austere" may remind us, in this connection, that our forefathers considered that a student's life should be tolerably self-denying and even hard. It may be that times have changed. So they have in many ways. But, without dwelling on Christian asceticism, we may certainly lay it down that in a Church student's disposition there ought to be a hard substratum of self-denial. No intellectual work can ever be done without such a temperament—that is, without a determination to keep to hours, to cut short idleness and indulgence, and to force the powers, to a certain extent. College life provides for these things. It is necessary, therefore, that the life should be intelligently accepted, and not only tolerated, but adopted *ex animo*. An old writer, John of Salisbury, who lived in the days when students made pilgrimages and endured much for learning's sake, has three verses, which I have seen somewhere, descriptive of the conditions which conduce to study:

> Mens humilis, studium quærendi, vita quieta,
> Scrutinium tacitum, paupertas, terra aliena,
> Hæc reserare solent multis obscura legendo.*

First humility of mind—that simplicity which takes the views and expositions of the text-books and professors without too much questioning, even

* Quoted in *More's Catholici*, Book III, ch. 6.

when it is not a question of the faith; for it is wise to learn a system thoroughly and sympathetically at first, even if after-reflection may bring us to reconsider certain portions and even to reject them. You cannot reach out or strike out in matters intellectual, any more than in matters corporeal, until you have got at least a temporary platform to stand upon. *Studium quærendi*—the serious wish to learn. On this I need not dwell. *Vita quieta*—life undisturbed by either the necessity for gaining your bread, or the dissipations of a town, or the visits of friends, or even by family life. *Scrutinium tacitum*—silent study, as opposed to the spirit which leads a youth even in his student days to make appearances in print or in public. *Paupertas*—that is "joyful poverty," as John of Salisbury says. Most of us are poor, and it is the chosen lot of Christ; and we are thus led to say with greater feeling "Our Father, Who art in heaven"—and to understand sacred books and sacred teaching with a depth which the comfortable and the well-provided do not easily attain. *Terra aliena*—exile. "Philosophy requires a foreign land," says John of Salisbury. Why should this be? I suppose because to live at home, to live in one's own country, is as much as to say that you have many distractions and occupations, pleasant and unpleasant. One of the first dispositions of a true priest is to have renounced all worldly ties, however innocent. One begins to learn this at college. And yet college is so far from being *terra aliena!* At one time, not so long ago, your own *alma mater* was really in a foreign land. And yet what does the writer say who wrote the narrative of its seizure? "We had loved it with fondness like our native home."

For it is with this generation as with the generations past; everyone who leaves his home for Christ's sake and the gospel receives back a hundredfold.

Patience

THERE is still another quality of the spirit required for the years of study—a quality which is not seldom overlooked, and that is Patience.

Patience, no doubt, ought to be found, and will be found, in every student who has the common-sense to appreciate his work, and a fair amount of resolution to carry it through. But I am here speaking rather of a mental quality than a virtue proper; of a way of regarding one's studies which will preserve the student from hurry, from discouragement and from misapprehension—a quality which depends a good deal upon that habit of wise reflection which it is the chief object of these pages to promote.

It is another pregnant saying of Aristotle that the "roots of the arts are bitter."* There is not much intellectual pleasure in the beginnings of any science. But roots are roots, and the wise student, whilst he does not expect to enjoy himself very much over his grammar and his theses, is well aware that roots mean fruit and flowers in due time. It is a considerable temptation to many students to be impatient of the formalities of study; of the hour for this and the hour for that; of the monotony of classes; of the verbal exactness required by the professor; of the repetition of dry definitions and demonstrations; of the forms, the formulas, the argu-

* *Laertius*, V, ch. 5.

ments and the distinctions; of the apparent trivialities on the one hand, and the useless erudition on the other; of the careful refutation of absurd objections, and the setting up of dead and gone heresies for the mere purpose of knocking them down again. But these things, or most of them, cannot be dispensed with. They are part of that mysterious process called training. It is of the essence of training that it aims directly at nothing outside of the subject who is being trained. If a man has not the wit to see this, and the patience to go through with it, he simply cannot be trained. Therefore the student must have patience and faith. He must not despair because he does not see results. He must not fret because he is not allowed to rush out, in the greatness of his powers, and preach, direct or write. He must not yield to the temptation, if such temptation comes in his way, of cutting short the years of his training. He must not hurry; he must not shirk; he must not transpose; he must not abridge. There is no short cut to education. It is a process in which each part must have time to set and solidify before the mind is fit for the next. And when education is thus pursued with leisure and deliberation, it is wonderful how the mind opens and strengthens. *Generosus animus labor nutrit* is a phrase of Seneca's.* Labour which is not forced—not the labour of a reluctant schoolboy, but of a free and enlightened youthful spirit—feeds and nourishes the mind. As a youth's course of studies goes on, his mind learns to note, to grasp, to generalize, to take lofty and wide surveys, to recognize its own limitations, to doubt of its own impulses, and by degrees to build itself up in systematic knowledge,

* Ep. xxxi.

so as to become, in some sense, acute, cautious, trustworthy, well-informed and wise. Our master and teacher, St Gregory, says that the "unskilfulness of pastors"—*imperitia pastorum*—"is often a fitting scourge for the evil deserts of their subjects"; and yet that this by no means diminishes the fault of those who venture on the pastorate without the *lumen scientiæ*.* When we consider the wide-reaching results of a priest's preparation—what he can effect, on the one hand, in his after life, and what he can mar, spoil and ruin on the other, the generous heart will think the time of preparation even too short. *Tria sunt studentibus necessaria*, says Hugo of St Victor; *natura, exercitium et disciplina*.† As to natural abilities, this is not the place to speak; except, perhaps, to say that, whilst a youth with very marked natural deficiency would be better advised to try some other vocation, even for his own sake, yet the Church does not expect or desire a supply of geniuses. It is often found that with moderate talents are united qualities and character which make the very best pastors. *Exercitium* is the process of cultivating and improving natural ability by sedulous labour; whilst *disciplina* is the sitting under masters and teachers, and thus sharing in that written word, that great treasure of acquired information, analysis and experience which, in sacred things as in profane, in religious matters as in secular, grows in the world from year to year. Let every student, then, understand his position and his work, and thus be honest and sincere with himself, with his professors, and with his bishop. Honest with himself—by being firmly convinced that he is bound to make the best of

* *Regula Past.*, I, i. † *Eruditio didascalica*, Lib. 3.

the years of his preparation, that study is a serious matter, and that, next to his prayers, he must put it foremost and give it the amplest room in all that he proposes or aims at. Honest with his professors—by working with them in sympathy (not to say, submission), by entering into their views for his good, by seconding their efforts, and by labouring generously to turn himself out (if I may use the phrase) with that fitness and finish which is aimed at by those who labour in teaching the ecclesiastical course. And with his bishop—who possibly makes great sacrifices for the maintenance and education of his subjects, and who is grievously deceived and dishonestly treated when, through giddiness, laziness or wilfulness, the time is lost or squandered which, as we have seen, can never be recovered. *Fac quod tuum est*, says St Bernard; *nam Deus quod suum est satis absque tua sollicitudine et anxietate curabit.*

CHAPTER VII

The Study of Philosophy

SOMETIMES it happens that a good many months of the course of studies of a Church Student are wasted by reason of his distaste for Philosophy. I am convinced that this dislike arises in very many cases from ignorance of what is the purpose and the meaning of the philosophical course. I propose therefore to address myself in this chapter to the consideration of this.

St Gregory* compares the pastor, with his obligations of preaching and teaching, to the

* *Regula Past.*, II, iv.

priest of the ancient Law, whose robe was ordered to be fringed with ornamental pomegranates and little bells.* The bells mean, that he is to be heard at all times; the pomegranates, with their multitude of small seeds under one rind, signify the one and only faith which he is to teach to the innumerable multitude of the faithful. When one merely names these two conditions of teaching—the oneness of the faith and the multitude of believers—one cannot help feeling that a problem has been set which is of the most momentous nature. The faith has to be taught to minds which differ from one another in capacity, in maturity, in education, in culture, in inherited qualities, and in nationality. The same faith has to be laid before school children and men of science, before savages and the princes of literature, before the nineteenth century and the first, before the Greek and the barbarian, before the European, and the Hindoo the Maori and the Kaffir. Moreover, the faith has to stand up against the commentaries, the questions, the objections of all generations. It has to face the philosophers of all the schools and of all the centuries of the west and of the east. It has to be fresh and actual as forms of speech grow antiquated, and to keep all its substance and vitality intact before the advance and the attack of every kind of new theory and novel phrase. What is even harder, its preachers in every age must sharpen their wits to put new point to their exposition and new turns to their development, or else the ears of the careless world will not mark; and all the time it must be the Faith once delivered, without change or corruption. And all this exposition, enlargement, adaptation, comparison, en-

* Exod. xxviii, 33.

forcement and persuasion is the work, not of the Holy Spirit, by revelation or plenary inspiration, but of the human minds of those human instruments, the pastors of the Church.

Many consequences follow from these considerations. But the most important, perhaps, is this: that the setting forth of revelation in suitable language is the one great work of the Christian teacher.

Now, the teacher does not find his language ready made. Even if others have been before him, he cannot adopt their exposition wholly; because he is himself and not they, and his audience is not precisely theirs. Besides, no exposition can be adopted, assumed or taken over, unless it is studied and understood. There is only disaster in trying to attain to words without the sense. Thus there is no way of escape. Every ecclesiastical teacher, whatever his audience, has to learn to put revelation into language. And the more exactly, skilfully and convincingly this is done, the more powerfully will religious thought tell upon the hearer, and upon the age and the world at large.

The task here described is usually attempted to be achieved by attention to two branches of study: rhetoric and philosophy. Of rhetoric, which chiefly concerns words and phrases, I am not now to speak. The study of the use of language is really of the greatest moment—greater, perhaps, than most of us realize. The natural faculty of speech in most men is not remarkable either for readiness or for effectiveness; and there is no one, however he be gifted by nature, who cannot by study and practice wisely directed, acquire additional clearness, force and impressiveness in the great human business of using words.

But what we are to consider at this moment is, that study which appears in every ecclesiastical course, and which takes up, under present arrangements, no less than three of the years which are given in the schools of the city of Rome to the training of the Church student—I mean what is called Mental Philosophy.

There is no one, probably, who is at all fitted by age and acquirements to enter a course of ecclesiastical study who is not able to understand in a great measure what is the object and the necessity of that training which is called Logic. In Logic we learn the mental mechanism of thought and reasoning. And the very first thing we learn on this subject is the revelation that there is a mechanism at all in mental processes. The understanding has made a great advance when it has come to comprehend that all this multitudinous thought and endless speech of which life is made up can be classified and marshalled into terms, propositions and syllogisms, into ideas, judgements and reasoning. This is a step towards science. For science is only possible by generalizations, and by the abstract. Revelation itself, considered as a mass of truths or propositions, vouchsafed to the world by the loving Providence of God, awaits the operation of the human intelligence to be formed into a science. It is in the class of Logic that the student's mind first finds itself in the universe of the abstract—that universe in which it will have to be able by and by freely to find its way about, but which at first is a land of shadows in a painful twilight. It is true that if he has given due attention to Mathematics he has made some progress in the exercise of abstract thought. There are no studies in a college course so useful in

strengthening the mind to obtain a footing in that disembodied sphere where all the mind's triumphs lie as the higher Mathematics. But when one begins the study of Logic, one leaves the hard and bloodless abstractions of roots and powers for the very marrow of the spiritual living being.

At first the mind does not plunge very deep. Yet deep enough for first essays! It is very useful to grasp the conception that the terms or words which fly so glibly from the mouth have all sorts of restless relations one to another. It might seem that as long as you had got hold of a word you had got enough. But no! That word—the outward sheath, let us hope, of an idea—may play you strange tricks. It may be too wide, or too narrow; it may seem to be a very quiet unit, when it is really the chief and head of a great class of words; it may sound very concrete and matter of fact, but may all the time have under it the most bewildering metaphysical caves and hollows; it may appear to mean merely the commonplace thing you have been accustomed in your pedestrian experience to connect it with, and yet when a keener analysis is brought to bear, it may flicker little flames, or sparkle like the diamond, or even evaporate into smoke. Unless the mind, in its earliest scientific career, becomes accustomed to expect and to recognize these vagaries of the ordinary words of human intercourse, that mind will never know what accuracy is, and will fall an easy prey to the more cunning intellect which shall attempt to darken counsel for its undoing.

Of not less advantage is it to study the relations of judgements or propositions; to note how a very slight alteration in the form of a sentence

makes the sense dangerously different: to study the behaviour of a word when it stands as subject and its sometimes very changed conduct when it is predicate; to place the little particles "is" and "is not" under the microscope and see what there is latent in them; to unravel the convolutions of a flowing sentence and set it out in simple affirmation and negation. Here, too, is the opportunity, once for all, of learning the accurate meaning of the application to judgements of a score of terms which, thanks to newspapers and popular books, are too often used merely to disguise haziness of idea; such as categorical, analytic, synthetic, necessary, per se, per accidens, a priori, contingent, a posteriori, universal, general, particular, singular, etc. Now also is the time to dive into the mysteries of reduplication, opposition, conversion and equivalence, and so provide oneself with serviceable weapons when the race of sophists, which never dies out, shall challenge us to defend the truth in matters religious, social or political. As to reasoning itself—the study of the syllogism and of the inductive method—it would be superfluous to try to prove that a man who has never studied this branch of rational knowledge must remain a child to the end of his life. By the syllogism the mind detects error and inconsequence; by it the truth can be uttered and exposed in an orderly, convincing and forcible manner. The easy handling of the syllogism is of enormous advantage in the whole of one's divinity course. You are aware that, in the demonstration of theological theses, and more especially in the refutation of objections or the solution of difficulties, a very large use is made of the scholastic "distinguo"—a method whereby, instead of talking at random

against one another, the disputants are enabled at each step to lay the finger on the exact point of difference. This "distinguo" is no mere empty and pedantic device of the schools. It is a most keen weapon, of quick operation, and fruitful in results. It clears the field, illuminates the intelligence, and kills all vague and useless wrangling. Now, no one can employ the scholastic "distinguo" with effect unless he is perfectly practised in the laws of the syllogism. It has often fallen within my experience to observe how a young man has failed to solve an objection merely because he failed to see a defect in syllogistic form, or has mechanically taken refuge in a distinction which was no real distinction at all. Had he thoroughly studied his logic he would have known where the sophism lay, just as those who deal with stone know where the lines of cleavage are, and with a light blow break off the piece that is required.

Logic being presupposed, the main purpose of the course of Philosophy is to furnish the student with a reasoned, coherent and true system of metaphysical notions. By metaphysics we here mean what Aristotle meant—the notions and processes which are formed and developed by the human intelligence, but which are grounded upon the physical universe, man himself being included in that universe. To men whose chief interest in this world is to be the grasping and proposing the revelation of God, the necessity for a system of metaphysics is twofold. First, as I have so often repeated, no field of labour can be a science unless it is laid out in order; and order means classification and inter-relation—which, as I need not point out, imply in their turn a multitude of abstract ideas,

such as cause and effect, genus and species, division, definition, essence, existence and many others. Secondly, the principal terms in which we find our holy religion expressed in the Scriptures and formulated in ecclesiastical definition, are themselves metaphysical terms. That is, they are terms which express those ideas or abstractions which the human mind has made by its action upon the things presented to it by the eyes and ears. It is obvious that no other course was possible, even to the Almighty Revealer Himself. For revelation must be expressed in words, and words must either express human ideas or else must be, as far as men are concerned, only empty sounds. This does not by any means imply that revelation does not go beyond human ideas, both by presenting undiscovered relations between ideas, and also by suggesting a certain infinity or immensity in certain ideas, which suggestion is, both spiritually and intellectually, of marvellous force and fruitfulness. But the terms of any revelation must, on the whole, be terms of human reason. Consider the following brief enumeration of words which are found in every chapter of Christian Revelation: Being, Life, Intelligence, Simplicity, Personality, Nature, Generation, Soul, Body, Spirit, Matter, Reason, Will, Mind, Sense, Responsibility, Virtue, Passion, Power, Good and Evil. Here are twenty-one ideas—and they might easily be doubled in number or trebled—and every one of them is like the Genius shut up in the box—if you take the lid off, it mounts into the air in a column of smoke, fairly defying any mind to grasp or circumscribe it. Yet these are the words with which the religious teacher must work. These are the words which, al-

though they are the common property of the human mind in all ages and under every sky, yet have to be used as the vehicle of a definite revelation, a revelation given to the world not only for the advantage of the world's philosophers, but much more for the use of the world's poor and unlearned multitudes. These are the words, therefore, which the student has to scrutinize, to define, to limit and to compare; so that when he comes to deal with them in the inspired Scripture or in the infallible definitions and daily magisterium of the Church, they may present to his mind those ideas which the divine Author of Revelation intended they should present, and none other.

In order, then, to be able to propose Revelation to the world, and above all to propose it scientifically, there must be a metaphysical system. That is to say, first of all, there must be an agreement as to the meaning of terms. If such words as Life, Nature, Reason and Grace do not mean the same thing to all who use them for the expression of Revelation, it must evidently be impossible that we should all agree in the significance of a revealed proposition. But philosophical terms such as these cannot be defined simply and nakedly; they are not mere technical symbols; they have not only a human history, which would prevent even the most ignorant from giving them a meaning entirely arbitrary, but they are attached one to another with a living connection which often makes it impossible to define one without reference to many others. For example, we cannot define Person without referring to Nature, nor Intelligence without adverting to Life, nor Grace without knowing what we mean by the Soul. But

a chain of definitions connected by demonstration is a system; and therefore a philosophical system is absolutely necessary for a Church student. Without it, his very catechism is to him as a foreign language. It is true, the simple and ordinary Christian can learn his religion without the need of a system of philosophy. But then the ordinary Christian can learn his religion without dogmatic theology either. It is not denied that the terms of Revelation can take an intelligible meaning to the faithful without our either accurately defining or systematizing them. But a teacher, for the reason which I have insisted on abundantly elsewhere, must have that wider, deeper, more comparative and more far-seeing knowledge which is called science. There is an object-lesson on this subject in what we see every day in a country like this. Non-Catholic preachers and writers, having no knowledge whatever of philosophical science, are steadily emptying Revelation of all its meaning. What, for instance, can the Athanasian Creed mean to men who have never inquired what is meant by Substance, Nature, Person or Spiritual Generation? What can the scientific idea of God be to those who are not trained to see the difference between the infinite and the finite, pure act and composition? No wonder they talk nonsense when they read in Holy Scripture that God repented, God was angry, or God walked on the earth. They can never really believe Christ to be very God as long as they cannot explain the seemingly discordant passages in the New Testament by some kind of philosophical statement of the hypostatic union. Uninstructed Catholics can adore without philosophy, because they

have the Church's usual exposition, which is profound but simple philosophy; educated Protestants cannot, because they do not rest in simple faith, but inquire and discuss, and because, in any case, they are strangers to that atmosphere of simple, sound and coherent philosophy which even the children of the poor pick up from hearing their pastors catechize. It is most melancholy to read the sermons, lectures, leading-articles, letters and books of the non-Catholics who, in vast numbers, undertake at the present day to teach what is called religion. Nearly every man has a different view of the meaning of theological terms. One will lean to Agnosticism because he has not fathomed the meaning of the word Infinite. Another will talk about the "limited and bloodthirsty" God of the Hebrews, because he has never studied the theory of analogy and analogical expression. A third will confuse physical evil with moral. A fourth will pronounce the Real Presence impossible because he has in his head no rational theory of physical substance. Some of them have studied logic—but not all of them, by any means. Examples of every kind of sophism exposed in the manuals can be found in popular non-Catholic religious writers. For example, the argument *a sensu composito ad sensum divisum* —as "No sinner can please God"; the *post hoc ergo propter hoc;* the one-horse induction; the fallacy of analogy; the assumed first principles; the ignoring of the other side; the rhetorical mixing up of truth and falsehood so as to confuse; and the use of strong and violent assertion in place of proof. I will not say that this altogether arises from a defective course of logic; but it may be truly asserted that an uncultured

mind is much more apt to indulge in unfair argument than one that has been taught to scrutinize and appreciate its own operations.

There is a further consideration which makes the study of Philosophy as taught in the ecclesiastical schools a foremost duty of Church students. The Catholic Philosophy as laid down by St Thomas of Aquin is not only a system and a science, but it is *true*. This is a very important matter. Our philosophy is not only a useful and commodious hypothesis, or series of hypotheses, for the scientific study of theology; it is a system which accurately names, distinguishes and correlates the real facts in the intellectual and spiritual order of the universe. This is certain, first because many of the terms and views of our philosophy are found to be determined by the form in which revelation itself has either been originally given to the world or defined and developed by the Church. Thus the words Nature, Substance, Person, Spirit, Soul—although even to this day there is, even among Catholic teachers, much difficulty in defining them with complete accuracy, and strictly determining their comprehension and extension, yet are so used in Scripture and in theology as to demand a certain minimum of meaning, and a certain determinate relationship with one another, which are distinct and most valuable acquisitions to true human knowledge, even on the philosophical side.

Moreover, this Philosophy—the Scholastic Philosophy, as it is called—comes to us with the weight of the most revered ecclesiastical authority behind it. It is now more than twenty years* since Pope Leo XIII issued his Encycli-

* August 4, 1879.

cal Letter *Æterni Patris*, urging, and indeed imposing, on the bishops of the Catholic world the teaching in their seminaries of the philosophy of St Thomas. With every allowance for the incidental weaknesses or errors of the scholastics, with the widest toleration and with an open mind for all that can be truly called advancement and progress in later times, the Holy Father lays it down that the Scholastic Philosophy is so bound up with revelation and Christianity that it will never, on the whole, be superseded. The benefits conferred on theology by philosophy are treated of by Pope Leo under three heads. First of all, it is by the use of philosophy that theology becomes a true and proper science. Next, through philosophy is acquired a more thorough knowledge *(uberior cognitio)*, of the things of faith, and a clearer understanding, as far as they can be understood, *(lucidior intelligentia)* of faith's mysteries. And thirdly, it furnishes the most effective weapons for refuting the attacks of unbelievers and heretics. It is Scholastic Philosophy, in fact, which has created Scholastic Theology. That wonderful sequence and connection, that splendid order, not unlike that of an army in battle array, those lucid definitions and distinctions, that strength of reasoning and acuteness of discussion—all these marked characteristics of the best schools and writers on theology, are derived from that strong philosophy, with which is chiefly associated the name of St Thomas of Aquin.

Of St Thomas himself the Pope speaks in terms which, as coming from the Holy See, claim the attention and consideration of every Catholic student. He says that it was the merit of St Thomas to have collected into one body the

scattered philosophical teachings of the Fathers. The Pope's view, throughout this Encyclical, is that there is a traditional Christian philosophy, only less clearly handed down than the faith itself. This philosophy St Thomas enlarged and digested, and, as we have it from him, it is justly regarded by Catholics as a singular glory and defence of the Catholic Church. There is no field of philosophy which St Thomas has not illustrated: the laws of reasoning, the being of God, the spiritual world, man and the world of sense, morality and its principles—all these and other subjects have been treated by him with a copiousness, an order, a grasp of principles, a soundness of reasoning, a power of language, and a miraculous penetration, which leave little further to desire.

The recommendations, or rather injunctions, with which the Holy Father concludes are these: The bishops are to bring back the "golden wisdom" of St Thomas, and to propagate it as widely as possible. Professors, appointed by the bishops, are to strive to make their students learn it well, and appreciate its solidity and excellence. And academies, that is to say, learned societies, are to be formed to illustrate and defend it. And finally, in order to be sure of the real thing, recourse must be had to the fountain-head, and Scholastic Philosophy must be read in St Thomas himself. This last direction suggests the Pope's motive in undertaking, at such vast expense and on such a magnificent scale, that great edition of the works of St Thomas, which is slowly approaching completion, and which will be a monument of the pontificate of Leo XIII.

I might here remind the student of the interest

and profit which he is sure to find in trying to penetrate the connection between mind and matter, in studying the intellectual soul with its marvellous operations, in endeavouring to discover how and by what process gross and solid experiences become ideas more immaterial than the ether of the planetary spaces. I might point out how philosophy alone can answer the eternal questions of the reality of being, the origin of this universe and human responsibility; how, in philosophy, the investigator comes across those streams of human illumination—the ideas of truth, goodness and justice—which, although at times almost dried up and at other times well-nigh disappearing under the sands of the desert, yet unmistakably flow on without ceasing across the vast continent of human reality, and lead up to the one source of all that is real, namely God Himself. The greatest minds of every age have been those who have lived in communion with philosophic thought, and a man who is a stranger to it is a stranger to what is noblest in the history of the race.

No ecclesiastical student, then, can do otherwise than look upon his years of Philosophy as a most fruitful seed-time. The time will come, if God permits, when he will have to "carry the vessels of the Lord";* as St Gregory says, "to carry in the bosom of his own responsibility living vessels into the temple of eternity."† As the high priest of old was enjoined to bear inscribed upon his breast the names of the twelve patriarchs,‡ so the priest of the New Law must cherish the precepts of the great Fathers of the Church. It is a mistake to suppose that those

* Isa. lii, 11. † Regula Past., II, ii.
‡ Exod. xxviii, 21.

precepts merely regard dogma or morality as such. The Fathers have left us a philosophy as well; a philosophy with which they illustrated and defended, each in his day and his place, the revelation of Christ. Let us thank the Holy Spirit that, in our own days, instead of being left to pick up our philosophy from the poverty-stricken and questionable dissertations of Locke and Stewart, or in the brilliant but mistaken essays of modern system-makers, Catholic and non-Catholic, we are warned back to that philosophy of reality, that philosophy of revelation, that philosophy of the Bible and of the Fathers, whose roots are as old as Augustine, as old as Aristotle, and whose growth has been in the past as it will be in the future, the glory of the Church of God.

CHAPTER VIII

The Study of Literature

THERE is literally nothing in the "Regula Pastoralis" on the subject of profane literature; unless we take the frequent denunciation of mere talk as compared with action—of empty words when contrasted with an edifying life—to imply that the holy Pontiff was quite aware, and did not consider it necessary to insist, that some kind of literary or "grammatical" preparation was absolutely necessary for the success of a pastor in the work committed to him. St Gregory's own style displays very careful culture and a marked literary character. The same remark applies to the style of every one of the great Fathers of the Church, Greek or Latin. Yet ever since the days of St Paul it has been thought needful for Christian teachers to warn the heralds of God's word

against the seductions and the artifices of worldly rhetoric. Fénelon, however, in his "Dialogues sur l'Éloquence" puts this matter in its true light. He shows that the words of St Paul—*non in sublimitate sermonis* (Rom. ii, 1), *non in persuasibilibus humanæ sapientiæ verbis* (ib. v, 4)—must not be understood of true eloquence, solid reasoning, or really effective speaking; but only of rhetoric without Christian ideas, and of that artificial oratory of which both the Greeks and Romans were so strangely fond, which charmed the ears and pleasantly stirred the imagination, but which left the heart cold and the will unaffected.

Bearing in mind what a pastor is intended to be and to do in the world, we cannot hesitate for a moment in deciding that unless he is what the ancients called a "man of letters," he can never be fully accomplished in his holy vocation. For the pastor has to teach and to persuade. Both of these duties demand intelligence, knowledge, memory, tact and the power of speech. But these endowments and qualifications, though some of them may be born with us, must be in great measure acquired, and in every instance carefully cultivated. They can best be cultivated by a training in literature. For in literature not only do we find facts, rules, systems and mental exercise, but we also learn that appreciation of elevated and beautiful ideas which is called taste, that grasp of the ideal which is our only guide in the busy details of work, and that philosophy of human nature, with its passions, impulses, excellences and weaknesses, without which mankind is a sealed book to men. The priest who is well read and cultivated, is a man of disciplined mind, who can direct his intelligence to a purpose and guide himself to its attainment. He is a man

well informed in the history of human thought, who can recognize old truths under new shapes, and is not astonished when he meets in his own generation aberrations and fancies which are really as ancient as Thales or Zoroaster. He is a man with a distaste for violent, crude, noisy, repulsive methods—knowing that, even if such ways succeed here and there, yet nevertheless, human nature is such that they must on the whole be ineffectual. He is a man who has studied and analysed models of speech, of instruction, of exhortation, of proof, of persuasion, and seized some of the secrets of the great masters of the art. His views are wide; that is, he is never prematurely certain of cause and effect; he looks twice and thrice at a phenomenon before he tries to decide its true nature; he knows that ends and purposes may be reached by more roads than one; he is not easily carried away by noise, glitter, boasting and success; whilst he knows how time, perseverance and incalculable accident may temper or efface imperfection and failure. It is not the least of his useful qualities that he has acquired for himself a new and wide universe to live in—the world of letters; the realm of history, ethics, poetry and romance. This realm is the antechamber to the spiritual life, for it has the power to keep at a distance what is gross, sensual and mean. It affords a recreation which only the most perfect souls can afford to despise. It furnishes a pleasant intercourse with minds similarly cultivated. The tone and temper which literary culture breeds is liable to abuse, and those who live for its own sole sake are often disagreeably fastidious, and sometimes proud and without any love for souls; yet there is no foundation on which grace builds more easily,

just as it is the finest marbles which best answer to the sculptor's art. On the other hand, how often do we find that the unlettered priest, even if he knows his divinity, is coarse, inconsiderate, tactless, rude, empty in conversation, resourceless when face to face with a thinking man, and too ready to seek company and recreations which appeal to the less noble side of human nature.

As a preparation for priestly work, therefore, it has always been considered needful to have some kind of a classical education. I do not hold that a man is sufficiently educated to begin his philosophy and divinity who is merely able to construe his Cæsar or his Virgil. The phrase includes much more than this. It implies a somewhat wide range of classical reading; a facility in Latin and Greek; an acquaintance with the literature, history, ideas and institutions of the great civilized peoples of the ancient world; and an appreciation of the rhetoric, the poetry and the oratory of the authors studied. Thus only can a young man come to the great technical studies of his clerical life with a really "cultivated" mind: that is to say, a mind quick to take in, well furnished with indispensable information, awake to general ideas, and genially responsive to the manifold voice of human nature.

That such a classical education can be acquired at our Catholic colleges has been proved over and over again. The classical course, it is true, is often cut rather short, and sometimes suffers from that poverty of means which does not allow us to secure the services of perfectly efficient tutors. But let a youth be taken through his five years of Latin and Greek, make him stick diligently to work, give him fair opportunities in

tuition and in books, moderate the encroachments of light reading, of music and of athletics, and let the general atmosphere in which he lives be just a little scholarly or (if you please) pedantic—and by the time he is seventeen he has made himself free of the republic of ancient letters; he lives in it, feels at home in it, is conscious of the rights and duties of citizenship, looks up to its leaders, and is anxious to do some service himself.

This admirable state of preparation for ecclesiastical studies should not be allowed to decay or to be lost. The classics should not be considered by any Church student to be the training of a child and nothing more. The classical taste should be kept up. Experience shows that only a very small, and a very preventible, portion of the evil results prophesied by some respectable alarmists have ever happened in a prudently followed classical course. On the other hand, one never gets fairly inside any literature of later times unless one has entered by the door of the classical tongues. The student of philosophy, therefore, or of theology, should not be so narrow or so neglectful as not to take such small trouble as is required to keep his classics fresh. He might continue to write Latin, which should grow better and better as he went on. He might read, in such leisure as he had, classics still unread—especially those more serious treatises, like Cicero's rhetorical and philosophical books, which he can now so much better appreciate, or those supreme masterpieces of verse which suffered in his younger days from having to be learnt as a task. He might compare that Christian kingdom, the institutions of which he is beginning to understand, with the dreams or the achievements of Homer and Plato, of Tacitus

and Lucretius. He might follow, as a bracing recreation, the labours and the discoveries of modern classical scholars. And if he had the chance, he might again go through parts of his old course, with new lights, by undertaking to teach those younger or less prepared than himself.

Passing from the subject of classical literature, we now come to consider literature in general, or rather, literature as we find it in our own age and country: that is to say, chiefly English literature.

The Church student has a right to know what are the patristic principles which regulate his attitude towards the non-ecclesiastical literature of his own day; how far he ought to study it, to indulge in it, to make use of it, in his own studious course, and with a view to his future work for souls.

St Augustine, with whose writings St Gregory was well acquainted, wrote a treatise which is called *De Doctrina Christiana*. It consists of four books. In the first three, St Augustine lays down canons and precepts for attaining to the understanding of the Holy Scriptures. But in the fourth he considers the question of "rhetoric," and its relation to the office of a teacher. He tells his hearers that if they want to learn the rules of rhetoric they must go elsewhere. He once taught those rules; but he has now something more weighty to attend to. Yet he hastens to add, that rhetoric, considered as the art of persuading and instructing, is by no means to be ignorantly contemned. True, profane rhetoric has a bad name. That is because, by its abuse, it has come to denote the art of sophistry, or the art of tickling the ear. I have already men-

tioned the strange propensity of the Greeks and Romans to delight in flowery and fanciful discourse. Doubtless this taste might be traced to Oriental sources. It is analogous to the delight that an artist takes in delicate carving, luxuriant embroidery, and minute patterns of jewellery. These works seldom speak to the intelligence, or appeal to the moral or spiritual nature. They please the eye and the fancy, and nothing more. Rhetoric of this kind—Isocrates is its classic example, but it has had its fashion in nearly every age, and we see its influence even in the fathers of the Church and in Shakespeare—is justly despised by men of good and serious taste, because, whilst the art of the sculptor or the embroiderer has no essential connection with morality, the art of speech is the born handmaid of the intelligence, and degrades itself when it fails to carry the spiritual and intellectual energy of the human spirit. To use the great gift of speech in order to execute purposeless pattern-work and fantastic ornament, is unworthy of educated men.

But true and sound rhetoric is a weapon which may be used with as much effect by the pastor as by the pleader or the orator. As St Augustine says, it is a mistake to allow a profane orator to use the skill of his art to put forth falsehood with clearness, terseness and persuasive force, and to be content that the teacher of truth shall be wearisome, obscure and unconvincing. Why should the former attack the truth with power and effect, and the latter be incapable alike of defending what is true or refuting what is false? Why should those who lead men wrong have the gift of moving, of inspiring fear, sorrow and joy, of pouring forth warm and stirring words of

exhortation, whilst the champions of the just cause are cold, drowsy and lifeless?

No one in these days is likely to dispute this view of St Augustine. But he qualifies it by an observation which is worth noting. A great deal too much, in his opinion, is made of the "art" of rhetoric, as distinct from the practice of speaking or writing. A man may do a thing, and do it well, without having learnt the theory on which it ought to be done. This is particularly true of speaking and writing. Acquaintance with good models, reading, common sense, general culture, combined with a comparatively slight degree of theoretical study, will amply fit a pastor for the effective discharge of his duty of teaching and persuading. It is not too much to say that the trainers of Church students, at least in recent times, have entered, perhaps, too thoroughly, into the spirit of this advice. We must remember that in St Augustine's day the treatises on rhetoric were very elaborate and minute, as indeed we may see for ourselves by what has come down to us. The great treatise of Aristotle itself is interesting as a study, but of little practical value. This is what Fénelon very truly says of it: "La Rhétorique d'Aristote, quoique très belle, a beaucoup de préceptes secs, et plus curieux qu'utiles dans la pratique; ainsi elle sert bien plus à faire remarquer les régles d'art à ceux qui sont déja éloquents, qu'à inspirer l'éloquence et à former les vrais orateurs."* It was evidently this kind of a rhetorical treatise that St Augustine had in view when he said that a man could speak or write without learning the art of doing so. And, for our own

* *Dialogues sur l'Eloquence*, Œuvres, ed. 1787, tome 3, p. 177.

guidance, the true principle seems to be this: that it would be waste of time to enter too deeply on the study of rhetoric as an art. There are some preliminary ideas that should be acquired, such as the classification of terms, the analysis of sentences, the arrangement and divisions of a discourse or essay, the various kinds of figurative language, and the forms of appeal to the feelings. These should be learnt, not because a man can become a speaker or a writer by knowing them, but because they are true so far as they go; they furnish a terminology for study of a more important kind; and they enable the studious and cultivated mind to apprehend and appreciate both the principles and the performances of the great masters of human speech.

But when St Augustine, in the forcible style that is his own, asks why a Christian teacher should be less clear, less strong, less finished, less lively or less energetic than any other speaker, he plainly lays down the objects and the purposes of literary study, as far as it regards the ecclesiastical student. We must study literature in order to fit ourselves with the means of teaching effectively.

For our present purpose, the advantage to be gained by literary studies may be summarized under the one word—style. I am aware that some of the associations of this word are not of the most dignified. But I do not know of any other which equally comprises in its signification those good qualities which a pastor's speaking or writing must have in order to be effective. Style I would define the choice and ordering of language so as to affect and influence the hearer. Style is an art; for we do not here speak of fugitive words or mere expletives, but

of spoken or written efforts, of a certain length and elaborateness. Now an art, to adopt Fénélon's description, is *une discipline réglée qui apprend aux hommes à faire quelque chose qui soit utile à les rendre meilleurs qu'ils ne sont.** How, then, can I explain to you the art of style?

Let me first give some kind of example of what I mean by style: of the effectiveness of speech as derived, not directly from the thought, but from the manner of the speaking. I once heard a preacher say, very fairly: "You may have committed a great many sins, but even if you had committed only one, your eternal loss might ensue; but your punishment would be the greater in proportion to the number of your sins. Even after one sin, in some instances, the sinner is cut off, and whilst the pleasures of this world end in his regard, he finds himself without hope for the next." Cardinal Newman has treated this same thought. He says: "It may be the hundredth, or it may be the first sin, no matter; one is enough to sink you; though the more you have the deeper you will sink. You need not have your fill of sin to perish eternally; there are those who love both this world and the next; they choose rebellion, and receive, not its gains, but death."† Although this example is too short to illustrate properly what is meant, yet one can easily see that Newman's words and sentences have a force, a striking and illuminating effect, which the others have not. As soon as the student begins to apprehend that things said in one way are effective which are ineffective when said in another, he begins to appreciate literary form or style. If, besides this, he observes that the effect

* Ibid. xvi, p. 205.
† *Discourses to Mixed Congregations*, p. 36.

depends on the accuracy and picturesqueness of the words, on the use of antithesis, on a certain unobtrusive use of repetition or enforcement, on neatness of sentence, and on harmony of period—then he has become conscious of a want, of an object to be attained, and, let us hope, of a desire and an aspiration.

You will not think that I am saying a hasty and ill-considered thing when I say that the acquisition of an effective style of preaching depends almost wholly on assiduous practice in *writing*. I do not deny that it is useful to study rules and to read models. But the amount of time which can be profitably spent in these two exercises, when compared with that which should be spent on writing, is not more than one to four. You soon get hold of a few terms, out of Bain or Blair. It is useful, and even necessary, to know what is meant by propriety of words, by purity, and by precision; to know that a sentence ought to be clear, strong, organic and harmonious. But it does not take long to master these ideas. So of reading; you do well in reading Cicero and Demosthenes, Bossuet, Burke and Newman. But unless you write more than you read, such reading leaves very faint traces, very shallow lessons. Unless you write more than you read, the eye does not mark, the imagination and intelligence are dormant and unresponsive. When a man has tried to make a steam engine himself, he knows what to look for at an exhibition of steam engines; but the ordinary spectator sees only a complicated system of wheels and valves, which he does not feel able or inclined to analyse. Thus, writing stimulates the thought, forces the imagination to work, reveals the obstacles and the pitfalls, makes a man realize how much he does

understand and how much he does not, and also, in the very process, gradually informs his mind with knowledge.

This being so, I will end this chapter by giving three rules for the practice of writing. They are not exactly the rules you will find in books—but useful hints, born of experience; although it is true you will find the substance of them in all the writers on rhetoric.

1. Always try to say the exact thing that you desire to say. I am supposing that you *have* something to say; that, in writing, you strike upon something fairly original, or at least original to you; for it is easy to copy, to extract definitions from manuals, to repeat commonplaces. In the actual exercise of the apostolic ministry it may sometimes be excusable to appropriate the words and the sentences of others. But to depend on such copying is, I need not say, to deaden one's own mind, and to throw over altogether anything like preaching in the true sense. Above all, it should be well understood that it is fatal to copy at the *beginning* of one's efforts to write or preach. It is then, if ever, that the student must stimulate the mind to some kind of originality, even if it be somewhat crude or fantastic. Having, therefore, caught a glimpse of the idea he wishes to express, he must study to express it exactly. There are no such things as synonyms. Every word has a distinct and distinguishable shade of meaning. There is the right word—*le mot propre*—for every idea; and if no one word will do, there is the proper phrase, the proper term, the proper arrangement. Newman, in describing the process of ceasing to lean upon this world, says: "We are (gradually) weaned from the love of it, till at length it floats before our

eyes merely as an idle veil, which, notwithstanding its many tints, cannot hide the view of what is beyond it." * Some people, writing in a hurry, would have said "hangs" instead of "floats"; some would have said "covering" for "veil"; some would have said "thin veil," or veil without the epithet "idle," which is the exact term for conveying its ineffectiveness. Compare "*Hangs* before our eyes like a *covering*," "*Floats* before our eyes like an *idle veil*."

Another example: "Some have thought that the minds of children have in them traces of something more than earthly, which fade away as life goes on, but are the promise of what is intended for them hereafter." † Some would have written instead of "traces," "marks"; instead of "something more than earthly," the less exact word "immortality"; instead of "fade away," "disappear." Such accuracy and felicity of expression can only be acquired by studious thought, by the perseverance of a reflective mind which, like an artist who tunes his violin, remains conscious of a feeling of dissatisfaction until the strings vibrate in perfect accord.

2. Do not say what has been too often said. Aim at originality. And here I am not thinking so much of copying, as of repeating what is trite and common, although in one's own words and fashion. To use the old views, the old commonplaces, the old divisions, the old texts—this will obviously save the trouble of thought. But it is just the labour of thought which is necessary, and which must be undergone, under penalty of forfeiting all elasticity of mind and all power of impressing other minds. There are certain common forms

* *Plain Sermons*, Vol. I, p. 20.
† Ib., Vol. VIII, p. 81.

which continually reappear in the sermons of young preachers. For example: the last judgement will be (*a*) consoling to the virtuous, (*b*) fearful to the sinner; our faith must be (*a*) strong, (*b*) active, (*c*) lively. Prayer is the raising of the heart to God; it is necessary for all; it must be attentive, devout, humble, confident, persevering. Far be it from me to say that these ideas are not true and useful, or that the preacher who sets them forth with simplicity, directness and piety will not do good work for souls. Much less, I need not say, would I insinuate that any preacher, young or old, should hold or express views differing from these so formulated. But the same things might be said in different words; the attack might be made by a different approach; one point only might be selected and well developed; the use of words or phrases so well known as to excite no attention might be skilfully avoided; the well-worn expressions might be brought in as the culmination of an argument, not as the heading. In these and similar ways the preacher might manage to stimulate the attention of his hearers. Let us observe the fashions of those preachers in heterodox bodies, whose daily bread depends more directly on their sermons than that of a Catholic priest does. Is not every device employed to make the hearers believe they are listening to novelties? New phrases are coined, allusions to actual occurrences are introduced, apparent paradoxes are uttered and then perhaps explained away, Scripture texts are torn to pieces in the search for leading ideas, and the humdrum views of the average man are held up to scorn—a scorn which does not always prevent these superior persons from saying very much the same thing before they

conclude. I am far from counselling our young preachers to try to emulate these self-advertising spouters, whose eloquence, if undoubtedly effective in its way, has neither the Gospel piety, the Christian modesty nor the Catholic faith. No preacher who is not reverent, reserved and devout can hope to do good. If he is grotesque, free-spoken, worldly in allusion and secular in idea, he may draw audiences, but he will not save souls. Still, there is no reason why he should not be fresh, striking, suggestive, original. But he can only become so by hard work and intelligent thinking.

3. Study well the art of making your sermon or your essay an organic whole. This sounds dry and abstract, but it is a most serious matter. The difference between a heap of stones and wood, and a house, is admitted to be considerable. But there is almost as much difference in sermons. An organism only exists when all the parts inter-correspond—mutually correspond. To take one part away, or to put it in a different place, would alter or spoil the organism. Hence there are two conditions which are opposed to the organic—first, the absence of all order, and next, the presence of an order which is nothing more than succession. Half-a-dozen rooms set in a row would not make a house, any more than a line of cut stones in heaps. I need not dwell on the necessity of some kind of order. It is a commonplace of the schools.

To achieve order is the first step to seizing one's own conceptions, and impressing the minds of others. But it is a step further when the writer attempts to discard mere succession, or, as we call it, division. I will here content myself with saying two things. First, divide, if you do

divide, a small field, and not a large one. Divide a field, and not a county or a canton. Divide vain-glory, and not pride; the prayer of petition and not prayer in general; Bethlehem, and not the Incarnation. Large subjects cannot be treated in divisions; because, with large subjects, each division tends to become an independent subject. This is what you meet in many of the French orators of the classical period. As Fénelon expresses it, they frequently fire off three epigrams rather than divisions, apparently to dazzle the hearer from the beginning. Secondly, lean rather to the side of suppressing formal division, and of substituting for it logical and emotional order. Experience shows that few things more inevitably dispose an audience to that kind of disaffection which arises from anticipated tedium than formal divisions. If, as may happen, the unregenerate hearer grows tired of the very first of the stages before him, his irritation is indefinitely increased by the reflection that there are still two more to come. The best kind of order is that which is clearly in the preacher's mind, but only reveals itself in effective sequence, in growing clearness and in increasing warmth. Fénelon describes this process very well. "The ancients," he says, "did not divide a discourse; but you find three things in their discourses; first, things that had to be made distinct were carefully distinguished; next, everything had its proper place; and, thirdly, it was a matter of the most careful consideration to put everything just in the place where it would be most effective."* There are no better rules for dividing or arranging a sermon than these.

Let me say, in conclusion, that, a knowledge

* P. 251.

of divinity being supposed, the secret of effective preaching is not very different from that of effective writing. In both, the object is to say what will illuminate and move. Doubtless the spoken word, as distinguished from the written, has attributes of its own. But the delivery, provided it be passable and not absolutely wretched, and except again in the case of real orators, is of small importance as compared with the language. It is true that the delivery of an ordinary Briton has a great chance of being absolutely wretched, unless he is instructed, and takes some pains to learn voice-management, emphasis and distinctness. But, supposing decent delivery, then the best sermon, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, is the one which is the best composed. I have not time to address myself to the question of how or when the preacher might cease to learn his sermons by heart and trust to improvisation. The answer to that evidently depends on numerous considerations of person, hearer, time and occasion. But this much seems certain to the end of one's career—that the sermon, whether learnt by heart or not, will be the better for having been written. The emptiness, barrenness and commonness of sermons comes almost wholly from a refusal to take the trouble to write. Without writing, practice in preaching is merely the growing more and more confirmed in weak phrases and irritating trivialities.

CHAPTER IX

The Views of St Gregory on "Learning" in a Pastor

THE whole treatise of the "Regula Pastoralis" has for its purpose to make a pastor speak effectively to his flock. But the word "preach" conveys a meaning too restricted for the views of the holy doctor. He rarely, in this treatise, uses the word *prædicare*. His word is *docere*—to teach. One of his principal objects is to insist on the duty of the pastor to "teach." The word includes three chief branches, faith or religion, exhortation and correction.

1. Now St Gregory, in this treatise, does not profess to give the dogmatic material of teaching, whether as to faith or as to conduct. Neither does he lay down the rules of rhetoric or grammar. But what he does is to give the *moral* side of teaching. The moral side of teaching is twofold: it includes the character and disposition of the teacher, and the character and disposition of the hearer. His predominating idea is, that pastors have to teach, and indeed do teach, but that the effectiveness of their teaching is too often marred by their own lives, on the one hand, and by their failing to understand, on the other, the human beings with whom they have to deal. Hence he begins his second part by saying that it is a pastor's duty not only *summa dicere*—"to utter things of supreme moment," but *summa monstrare*—"to exhibit in the eyes of all the loftiest perfection of life." * If a pastor must be humble, simple and an interior man, it is be-

* II, iii.

cause otherwise his words will produce no fruit. If he must avoid secular business, it is because his time must be given to souls. If he is exhorted to make himself loved by his flock, it is because otherwise they will be less ready to listen to his voice. If he is exhorted to study time and opportunity, to distinguish between one character and another—as he is exhorted throughout the whole of books II and III—it is in order that there may be no members of his flock whom his instruction, his encouragement and correction may fail to reach and help. As the holy Pontiff says in one of his letters, *Episcopi est de prædicationis ministerio semper cogitare*—It is the duty of a pastor to have in his thoughts constantly the ministry of preaching, pondering with the most earnest fear those words of our Lord: Trade till I come.* We may lay it down, therefore, as a principle for our own guidance, that St Gregory considers that a pastor who cannot or will not make it his chief work to serve the souls of his flock by speech, is no pastor. Hence any man who aspires to be a pastor is bound, in St Gregory's view, not only to fit himself to teach, but to make teaching his great aim in all his preparatory work. This hardly needed showing, but it was necessary to refer to it, as to one of St Gregory's fundamental principles bearing on the subject of ecclesiastical study.

2. Our next observation is grounded on a very beautiful passage which is found in the twenty-fourth chapter of the third book. St Gregory is speaking of the way in which the pastor ought to treat the educated portion of his flock—those who are well instructed in religious knowledge. Among other things, he says that such persons

* Lib. II, Ep. 39, ad Dominicum Episcopum.

should be admonished not to use their knowledge to stir up strife and discord. He then quotes the passage from the Prophet Osee (ii, 8), "And she did not know that I gave her corn, wine and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they have used in the service of Baal." These words he uses to show what Christian Learning should be to the heart of the priest. First, it is the wheat which the fan winnows and the mill grinds small, to be the food and the sustenance of the priest's intelligence. Next, it is wine, for it warms the affections and inebriates, as it were, the heart, drawing those who study to the love of Jesus Christ. Then it is oil—for it is a sweet and easy rule and guide of life and moral conduct, making our own service of God pleasant and profitable, and the guidance of others safe and gentle. Moreover, it is as silver, filling the priest's mind with the clear light of divine truth, to lead him safely among the innumerable false lights of the generation in which he lives. Lastly, divine knowledge is gold, for it is the only true wisdom, the only explanation of life's enigmas, and the most precious possession which can be held by an immortal spirit destined for immortality and for God. These words, which might be paralleled by many similar passages in St Gregory's writings, give us a glimpse of his own way of study; of that deep and serious solicitude and application without which no man can become acquainted with the treasures of God's revelation, the teachings of the holy Fathers and the labours of the theologians; that warmth of devotion and that spirit of meditative prayer which such studies ought to excite, and that joy in our faith, that satisfied clinging to Catholic views and convictions, which the good and humble

priest has a right to look for from a course of studies conscientiously made.

3. St Gregory's view of the great importance to a priest of Learning—although it is not the professed object of the "Regula Pastoralis" to insist upon it—may be gathered from a striking saying in Book II, chapter 2. He is alluding to the passage in Exodus (ch. xxv), where the Ark of the Covenant is described. He observes that the Ark has to be carried by bars inserted in rings in the sides of the Ark. What is the Ark, he asks, but the Church of Christ? And what is meant by the Ark being carried on bars or staves, except that the knowledge of the Church's doctrine is brought to men by her worthy teachers and doctors? Strong and firm must such teachers be, incorruptible like the setim wood of the Ark's supports, and overlaid with gold by practising the virtues which they teach to others. And it is noted that the bars must never be withdrawn from the rings through which they pass. Thus the Church's pastors must be always ready, always prepared, constant in their application to Holy Scripture, ever studying the word of God, that without hesitation or delay the sacred Ark of doctrine may be lifted up when the opportunity offers, and those who occupy the posts of God's preachers may ever be at the service of the souls who have to be saved.

4. Let me mention a fourth principle laid down for priests by St Gregory on the subject of studies and learning. It is this—that the pastor should know far more than he is ever likely to be called upon to impart. Moses, says the holy Doctor, when he came down from the mountain—from his secret interview with God—veiled the

shining of his face from the multitude. That is to say, the pastor does not pour out to the people the hidden things of his inmost knowledge. The man who digs a cistern and neglects to cover it up, was condemned in the Mosaic law to pay the value of the animals that might fall in and be killed. So the pastor who has dug down to the deep fountains of knowledge—*ad alta scientiæ fluenta*—does not, and ought not, to make his flock participators in his own treasures. St Gregory is of opinion that a pastor who speaks too learnedly or deeply to his people may easily do them harm. This is evident. To raise doubts without the opportunity of solving them, to discuss questions which require a trained mind to settle, to waste in speculation time which ought to be given to practice, and to dally with subjects which may upset, shock, or scandalize the minds of those infirm in faith—any preacher can understand the danger that lies in these things. Yet St Gregory takes it for granted that, however carefully the pastor should adapt himself to an audience that may be unprepared for what is too deep, he himself must always possess what he calls the *alta*, the "strong meat" (1 Cor. iii, 1), the *occulta mysteria*, the *subtiliora*, of heavenly things, which he should have acquired by study and meditation. A man may have to spend his life in preaching to labouring people and catechizing children, but he would make a great mistake if he cared not to learn more than they would require to know. Speaking generally, it may be perfectly true that our congregations, whether in town or country, do not need to know the philosophy of St Thomas, or Petavius on the Trinity, or the theory of probabilism; but their priests should know these things, because no man can impart

knowledge unless he stands above it—just as you cannot describe a valley until you have climbed on to the hill that overlooks it. Information such as one picks up out of a manual or a compendium is frequently so devoid of vitality in the mind as not to deserve the name of knowledge; it lies in the intelligence like a lump of ice, at whose contact the spiritual receptivity shrinks, and it speedily melts away. But information derived from a wide study of cause and antecedent, pursued into far-reaching consequences, and compared with the ever-expanding circle of things around, speedily becomes a part of a man's intellectual life, and when it has to be used for others, it is used as a man uses his own eyes or fingers, easily, surely and completely.

5. Yet another canon of ecclesiastical science is found by St Gregory in those words of 2 Cor. ii, 17: "We speak as from God, before God"—*Ex Deo, coram Deo.* This is rather a spiritual canon than a direction for study. Yet it is so fundamental—being indeed the very foundation of all correct and fruitful appreciation of study—that it must not be omitted. We must remember, then, that preaching or religious teaching, in its wider sense, may justly be called the one only way which Almighty God has of reaching the hearts of those He longs to save. It is true there is the hidden operation of His grace. But without for one moment forgetting that divine grace prevents, accompanies and perfects every supernatural work of heart or hand, it is equally undeniable that without preaching or teaching there would, in the vast majority of cases, be neither faith nor love nor perseverance. Indeed, one of the very first effects of God's bounty to a soul is to urge it to listen to His word. Without that

word, neither personal talent, nor natural virtue, nor example, nor the sight of the wonders of the natural or supernatural world ever do bring any man—speaking of the general rule—even to the threshold of the way to life. Without this spoken word no one ever perseveres therein. To say this, is not to presume to put a limit to the power or the goodness of God. God can save men without external teaching as easily as with it. All that is here asserted is that, as a rule, He does not do so. Religious teaching, then, is God's only means of access to the human heart. It is as if the omnipotent God had bound Himself to silence by His own laws—as indeed He has—and stood behind the veil, waiting for those to speak for Him whom He has chosen for that most sublime of all offices. To them he entrusts His word—a word which they have not had to invent or to elaborate, but which is ready from the ages, and which is put into their hearts and mouths by Himself. Them He furnishes with every kind of power from on high, simply that they may speak for Him. Even the sacraments, even the Eucharist, are empty and dead, or even deadly, to those who have never been instructed, or have spurned the word of teaching. The whole order of divine operation—creation, redemption, this physical universe, man's moral and intellectual nature, all history and all science—exists for one purpose only, that man may be brought to the knowledge and service of God. All these things are dumb or ineffectual without the word of teaching. The pastor is the "ambassador" of Christ. He speaks God's own message, and he speaks it in the presence of God. Omnipotent as God is, He is here in the hands of His creature. And if God loves the souls whom He has made, if God has sought

those souls by the most wonderful of all mysteries, in His Incarnation, and has given Himself for them in the stupendous immolation of the cross, what, think you, must be His solicitude that the word which alone can make fruitful either the Incarnation or the cross, should be brought to men's hearts with something of that same ardour and devotedness of which He Himself has given once for all the example? Hence a time of study is a time of seeking inspiration. It is a time when the Holy Spirit is, as if with fire, cleansing the lips of those who are to speak for Christ. It is a time when the Lord has called His servant to the heights of Horeb, or among the clouds of Sinai, to impart His everlasting message to one who is to deliver it to the multitude. Books, treatises, lectures, the words of the ancients and the lessons of the living—all these have to be made the most of, for no visible miracles are to be expected—no tongues of fire or horns of light; all our powers must work, and must work all the more strenuously in such a cause. But if God's love and God's redemption are realities, and not mere fiction or fancy, then He must be very near unto them whom He calls to the work of His word; not only pouring His grace and light upon their studies, but divinely jealous both of their efforts to learn, and, ever afterwards, of their due fulfilment of the office that He has given them, to teach.

The feeling, therefore, that the seminary or college is truly the temple of God, where God is desirous to speak, if He can but induce His servants to listen and note, should fill the student with a reverence for every kind of ecclesiastical study. *Ex Deo* is the expression of the conviction that leads him to work as though God Him-

self, and no other, were His tutor. He labours at no earthly science, he aims at no profane accomplishment. He is not preparing for the honours of any schools, or to fill a conspicuous place in a profession, or to gain the means of comfort and luxury. He is fitting himself to grasp God's message to a perishing world; to understand the great counsel of the Incarnation; to penetrate Christ crucified. And he cannot but desire to study in God's sight—*coram Deo.* For he is in God's sight—the sight of the One who has chosen him and called him, who keeps his faith and provides him with every help, who watches his efforts and measures his progress, so that the good day may one day come when he may go out as a prophet, and teach, guide and exhort those souls of men for whom the zeal of the Sacred Heart burns through all generations.

CHAPTER X

The Study of Holy Scripture

THE Sacred Scripture is called by St Ambrose *Liber Sacerdotalis*—the Priest's own Book.* We have seen how St Gregory, in the "Regula Pastoralis," looks upon it as the indisputable duty of a pastor to read and study the word of God with the most assiduous care; and how, indeed, the Scriptures were, to the clergy of his days, at once a dogmatic and moral theology and a book of devotion.

In our own day it may truly be said that in all these branches of pastoral instruction and prayer it is the custom to use rather books about the Scriptures and books grounded on,

* Lib. ii, De Fide, cap. 7.

or made up out of, the Scriptures, than the Scriptures themselves. Something of this kind was sure to happen in the progress of the human intellect within the limits of faith. It was natural to annotate, to comment on, to arrange for special purposes, that divine treasury which St Gregory calls God's letter to men: *Epistola Omnipotentis Dei ad creaturam suam.** Dogma kept growing in clearness and precision; morality was developed in every direction by investigation; preachers, as years went on, searched out what they wanted for their purposes; and devotion, whilst it used the divine formula of worship and prayer, invented forms of its own, which accumulated from age to age, to emphasize and bring more clearly before the eyes of the heart those inexhaustible aspects of God's greatness, mercy and love which lie more or less hidden, like the diamonds in the blue clay, in every page of the sacred book. It was impossible, then, that Christianity should confine itself to one book, even though that book was the word of God. But it cannot be denied that the multiplication of books, however intimately connected their subjects might be with divine things, has always had a tendency to withdraw attention from Scripture itself. This must be an evil; for however fully other books may reproduce or make use of Holy Scripture, no other book can ever be the word of God, and no other book, therefore, can ever produce either that illumination or that devotion which it is the especial prerogative of God's word to cause in the rational beings whom He has created.

It is not uncommonly asserted, both by non-Catholics as a gibe or taunt, and by mem-

* Lib. iv, Ep. 84, c. med.

bers of our own household as a mournful confession, that Catholics neglect Holy Scripture, and are less at home in its pages than Protestants of a corresponding class. I do not think there is much truth in this. Putting aside the Protestants who use Scripture as a mere quarry for aggressive texts, and those who have no more than that illusive smattering which is the result of sitting in church, it is only here and there that you find any one who knows the Bible really well. The good old-fashioned Protestant —generally a woman—who loves the Bible and has it constantly in use, is not very often met with.

As for Catholics, it may be that the attitude of the Church towards the Bible—an attitude rendered absolutely necessary by its having been abused as it has—has chilled and does chill that devotion which in itself it is calculated to excite. For the Church has found it necessary to restrict the reading of the Bible, and to warn her children against certain dangers arising from its indiscreet use. Her principle is, that experience has proved that in these latter days to allow the use of the Bible in the vulgar tongue to all without distinction does more harm than good.* As St Augustine said in his own day: "The origin of all heresy is the bad interpretation of the good Bible, and the rash and bold utterance thereof."† Ever since the days of Innocent III there has been a succession of legislation on the part of the Church, warning and restraining the faithful in view of the dangers here referred to. The natural effect of this has been to check the reading of the Bible itself. It is true there are vernacular versions in abundance, annotated with

* Reg. iv Indicis. † Tr. xviii in Joan. 1.

all due care and approved by authority, which the flock can use with all freedom, and these versions are to be found everywhere. But it is doubtful whether they are much read. The reading of the Bible is not urged upon the flock. I am far from admitting that the Catholic people have not a fair knowledge both of the contents of the Bible and of its phraseology. The children are carefully taught Old and New Testament history. Portions of the Gospels, of the Epistles and of the Sapiential books are read each Sunday in the church. The common devotions are sometimes purely biblical, as the Psalms, and are frequently full of scriptural terms and phrases. Then again, all who are interested in controversy speedily become acquainted with a great variety of biblical passages. Sermons, moreover, as the Church prescribes, contain numerous passages of holy Scripture.

Without discussing whether this comparative coldness of our people to the Bible is on the whole good or bad, or whether it is practicable at the moment to bring about any change, I admit that it affords some explanation of a fact which is beyond all doubt lamentable—I mean, the too great indifference of the clergy to the text of the Bible. The fact may be stated briefly thus: that few of us read the Bible as a whole, or even any single book as a whole. The consequences of this are, first, that we are in a great measure absolutely unacquainted with the treasures of illumination and devotion which the Bible contains; and, next, that our apprehension of the isolated texts and limited portions which we do know is conventional, barren, uninspiring and sometimes extremely inadequate. To the clergy, at least, there is no restriction. They can read

the Vulgate with the utmost freedom—not to say the approved vernacular versions. On the clergy the reading of the Scripture is urged from every side—by the canons, by the councils, by the sovereign pontiffs, by the masters of the spiritual life, by the Fathers, and by the Scriptures themselves. I should like to point out briefly why so much stress is laid on reading the Bible.

First of all, the Bible is, and must always continue to be, the text or ground of all dogmatic and moral theology. Theology, however wide its development, after all can only investigate and comment upon the Scripture. Whatever the Church has defined, whatever has grown up in the consciousness of the faithful, is contained, in germ at least, and sometimes even in flower and fruit, although perhaps hidden by the leaves of mystery, in the text of the Bible. If you read such treatises as St Athanasius on the Incarnation, St Basil on the Holy Spirit, St Hilary on the Trinity, St Augustine on Grace, or St Gregory's Pastorals, you see that for every step there is an appeal to Scripture, and that every conclusion rests on Scripture. Our own theological manuals and courses treat Holy Scripture in precisely the same way; that is, they cite Scripture texts for every proposition. But it is obviously impossible that the Bible should find in these manuals adequate recognition and treatment. Some modern authors, it is true, such as Franzelin, do give masterly inductions of Holy Scripture, pursuing a theological idea through text after text, and book after book. But our educational text-books have to be summary; they have to present conclusions rather than demonstrations; and they rather follow those who have studied the Bible at first hand than investigate

it for themselves. Hence we are presented in our usual theses with only a text or two, in naked isolation; and it is little wonder that such texts make slight impression, or that they have the air of being inserted rather as a point of decorous conventionality than for any vital purpose. The effect of this treatment of Holy Scripture is that theology has in some degree receded from revelation. Not that the faith itself is any the less whole and complete, or that it is not absolutely necessary that in the Church theological and scholastic terms and formularies should be accurately known. But, after all, there is a difference between the technical phrase of the dogmatic definition, and the warm, living, breathing utterances of the Spirit of God.

For example, there is much more power and force in the expressions of the Gospel of St John, "In the beginning was the Word . . . . the Word was with God . . . . the Word was God," than in the dogmatic proposition, "the second Person of the Trinity is consubstantial with the Father." "Another Paraclete I will give to you," certainly proves the mission of the Holy Spirit; but, read in its context, it has the further effect of a loving utterance of our Lord and Saviour. All the numerous texts which are adduced, generally with the utmost brevity and with the most summary reference, to prove the truth of the Church's teaching on the Trinity and the Incarnation, are indefinitely more luminous when read in their context; and moreover, when so read, they are felt to be the very revelation of God, who has chosen these words and phrases to make His mysteries known. You can see with what devotion and eloquence the first-hand investigation of the Scripture inspired the holy

Fathers whose writings I have referred to. It cannot but be a great loss to us that the constantly repeated biblical citation should come to be regarded as mere proof, and nothing more. Neither is it a less disadvantage that there should be other passages innumerable, full of suggestion, confirmation and illumination, which we never know of, because we do not read the Bible. And this is true not only of the Gospels and Epistles, in which we find the Blessed Trinity, the Incarnation, the Church, the sacraments and interior work of the Holy Spirit; but also of all the pages of the Old Testament. As St Jerome says, in reading Isaias you might think that you were reading the gospels; and as he says again, no one who is ignorant of the Bible can be said to know Christ.*

The psalms and the prophets are full of Christian theology. What else, indeed, was to be looked for, since the same Spirit is the author both of the Scripture and of the Christian faith, and since all that was spoken and written in the ancient dispensation was a preparation for the Christian inheritance? It must, therefore, be to our serious loss if we do not search for and find Christ in the Bible. We lose, not perhaps mere information, not bare dogma, but that setting of dogma without which the fastidious human heart will hardly cherish it; that glorious and spacious landscape in which the great obelisks, pyramids and sphynxes of dogma stand immovable; the preludes and harmonies of the strong truths of salvation; the tones and accents of the loving and gracious teacher who, in the dogmas of faith, has written down the law of Christian thought and salvation. By neglecting the text

* Proem. in Isaiam.

of Holy Scripture, in a word, we go a long way towards making theology a dry, technical and legal code, instead of a winning, glowing and many-sided personal revelation of God our Father.

It is not necessary to dwell on Holy Scripture n its devotional aspect. The same, or very similar, disadvantages in the science of the interior life follow from our unacquaintance with its text as we have noted in regard to sacred learning. The spiritual life is, and must be, grounded on Holy Scripture. It is in the Bible alone that we find the inspired narrative of the life and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is in the Bible that we read of death, judgement and the future. It is there we learn by a thousand sayings, parables, maxims, narratives and illustrations, what is meant by true and solid morality. It is in those pages that the soul of the Christian finds the terms and sentences in which the Holy Spirit has clothed that supernatural revelation of Faith, Hope and Charity, and of His gifts, fruits and beatitudes, which is the source and guiding light of all Christian spiritual teaching. Manuals other than Scripture do put forth these things. Nay, manuals are useful and even necessary in their way. But to neglect the Holy Spirit's own text-book is to run the risk of separating spirituality from revelation. It is, here again, to tend to the substituting of technicalities for our heavenly Father's own admonitions. It is to incur the danger—one of the greatest dangers in the spiritual life—of coming to look upon spirituality as a human system, rather than on what it truly is—the direct work of the Spirit of God in the souls He has created. Hence St Gregory says: "He who is impregnated with super-

natural fear and love should solicitously study day by day the precepts of the Word of God." *Supremae formidinis et dilectionis spiritu afflatus, studiose quotidie sacri eloquii praecepta meditetur.**

Those who agree in these views will find themselves face to face with a difficulty which must be fairly met. To read the Bible with anything like completeness and adequate intelligence is a long and difficult task. The Holy Scriptures are a whole world and universe of divine doctrine. Like the world itself, or the heavens, they are full of the richest variety; they originate in hidden laws, and obey in their development rules which are not easily analysed in the handbooks of mortal men. Like God's creation, they seem to be redundant here, defective there, irregular, puzzling and self-contradictory; but always full of life, growth and luxuriance, affecting with a sense of wondering admiration the heart even of him who despairs to understand them. How is it possible for students, or for any man with such leisure as the priestly ministry affords, to master the riches of the Bible? To attempt to study the whole Bible is to invite failure; to limit one's efforts to a part would seem to be like trying to divide into chapters and sections a world which is made up of mountains, plains, forests, rivers and oceans.

In attempting to give some answer to this difficulty, I must first say that it is not my intention to criticize or deprecate any course of Sacred Scripture which may at present be given in any seminary or college. I am almost entirely unacquainted with the kind of instruction usually given, or with its extent. I simply express what seems to me to be dictated by common sense,

* *Regula Past.*, ii, 11.

when it is a question of lessons on the Bible given to scholars of eighteen or twenty during a space of three or four years which is much occupied by theology and other things.

I begin with the principle that it is not enough to study about the Bible, but that the Church student must study the Bible itself. This distinction is most important. The investigation of the history of the Canonical Books, or of the authenticity of such a book, or such a passage, is to study about the Bible. The biographies of the writers, discussions on the nature and extent of inspiration, and on the various names to be found in the sacred books, as well as matters of chronology, geography and archæology—to learn these things is also not to learn Holy Scripture but to learn about it. These are the subjects which are treated under the heading of General Introduction —a heading which is ever expanding and taking in fresh details. It is not too much to say that many a student has spent his whole allotted course in these introductory studies without ever once looking into the Bible itself. Imagine what would be thought of studying Shakespeare or Homer in this fashion!

My first recommendation, then, would be to omit a large part of what is now studied as Introduction, and to take to the text of the Bible almost at once. My reasons are two. First, no one is ever really interested in a book by reading merely about it. Authenticity, history and canons of interpretation make little impression as long as the subject matter of the book concerned is unknown or unappreciated. Next, a large part of what is called Introduction is, in my opinion, unsuitable for students in theology. I refer especially to the enormous subject of the

age, authorship, genuineness and textual criticism of the Bible. Certainly few subjects are more vital, at this moment, to the cause of the faith; few more dexterously used by those who are against the Church and Christianity. But that is an argument for special studies later on, not for wearisome and objectless technical grinding at an age when young men can never be brought to appreciate such matters.

It must not be understood, however, that all of that which comes under the denomination of "Introduction" should be left till the student has finished his course. Certainly not. There are many things without which no intelligent study of the text is possible. Among these, omitting all that regards the study of languages, I would place a general chronological survey of the Bible, the meaning of inspiration, the discussion of the various "senses" (literal, moral, mystic), and a brief statement of the circumstances under which was written any book the student is engaged with. These things directly regard the interpretation of the divine word. Without some knowledge of them you cannot move a step in understanding its meaning.

As I have said, I would make this preliminary study short and summary. What the student would then be made acquainted with would be rather adapted to stimulate than to satisfy inquiry; it would show him what direction to take, and when and where he ought prudently to doubt. The moment he took up, as I shall presently point out, some definite book, he would begin to feel the utility and the importance of these prolegomena; he would find himself coming back with a new interest to what had seemed more or less pointless, and

he would push out into deeper and wider studies as he realized the presence of practical difficulties. As he went on with his reading, he would also find himself confronted with questions of chronology, history, geography and archæology, and to solve these satisfactorily he would turn to the manuals and books of reference, to which, under other conditions, he would have felt no attraction whatever.

It will be seen, then, that with the reservations here indicated, I would most strongly recommend that the student should set to work, at the earliest possible moment, with the actual living word of God itself. It is true that few, during their course, can look forward to reading the whole Bible from cover to cover. This should be aimed at as a task in one's life, but not necessary as a task to be accomplished before ordination—I mean the careful study (not the mere cursory reading) of every verse of the sacred Books. But during the course of studies it will only be possible to deal with one or two Books.

If I might be allowed to suggest a short and yet fairly complete and representative course of Bible study, which might be spread over three years, it would be thus:

First, a limited "Introduction" as explained above. Next, the Epistle to the Romans, then the Gospel of St Matthew, after that the Psalms, and lastly the Prophet Isaias.

* This was written, as it need not be observed, before the publication of the Constitution of the present Pontiff *De ratione studiorum Sacræ Scripturæ in Seminariis clericorum servandâ* (March 27, 1906). The Holy Father here directs that the study of scripture shall extend over the whole Seminary course, and prescribes that no Book of the Bible shall be left altogether without notice. I venture to think that the spirit of the remarks

My reasons are briefly as follows: It seems advisable, in studying the text of Scripture, to begin with the New Testament. A beginning should be made, if possible, with what is easiest. Now the New Testament, however profound may be its subject-matter, is easier to Christian learners than the Old. Its subjects are nearer to us, its language is more intelligible, its terms more familiar and its standpoint, if I may use the phrase, more modern. Christ, as seen in the actual fulfilment of the divine promises, is later in order of time than Christ in the prophecies; but he is prior in the order of our own apprehension. Grace and truth, although they are difficult words in the New Testament, are far wider and vaster terms in the Old. The history of the Jewish people and of their legislation, as read in the Old Testament, will never have its due interest and significance unless the student first possesses some grasp of what that history meant to our blessed Lord and to St Paul.

For a similar reason, I should take the Epistles before the Gospels. The Gospels seem easier, but in reality they are not so. Doubtless, history or narrative is easier than the Pauline theology. But we are not here speaking of the mere Gospel narrative. It is to be presumed that a youth who has got so far as his divinity or his philosophy is adequately instructed in the history both of the New Testament and the Old. What is here under discussion is Scripture interpretation. Now St Paul is no doubt difficult and obscure; grace, merit, predestination, faith and the Church are

made in the text is not in any way at variance with the Constitution, although the Holy See requires a long and complete course where this can be provided.

not easy matters to understand. But their difficulty is slight compared with the questions which arise out of the Gospel narrative, such as the personality of God, the manhood of Christ, physically and intellectually, the relations of the human and the divine in our Lord's words and works, His sufferings, His sacrifice, His resurrection and the world's redemption. No tolerable knowledge of the text of the Gospels can be pretended to unless the student can, to a certain extent, read the mysteries which lie hid, like ripe fruit under the leaves, beneath the phrases, the terms and the sentences of the Evangelists.

It seems to me that, of the Epistles, the Epistle to the Romans might well be selected for study, until we can read them all. That Epistle is not the first in order of time. But it is the most comprehensive of all, and on the whole the noblest. St Paul's great and recurring topics—the dispensation of Christ, His grace and man's redemption, together with the abolition of the Jewish law and the first Christian heresies—are nowhere more fully or more completely treated. This Epistle, which seems to have closed the group of Epistles written during the Apostle's second missionary journey, sums up, as in a wider treatise, the teaching of Corinthians and Galatians, and is indeed, as it has been called, "the religious philosophy of the world's history." Here, then, we find, as food for our learning, the characteristics of the great Apostle—his terms, his arguments, his citations of the Old Testament, his peculiar abruptness and *siopesis*, as well as his burning zeal, his eloquence, his affection and his tact. The Epistle to the Romans once mastered, the student holds the key to St Paul.

The Gospel of St Matthew, being the principal Gospel of the synoptists, may serve for study until we can study them all. The student there learns to analyse the narrative terms of the first Christian century; to see the treasures that lie in a word or a phrase; to compare Scripture with theology; to understand the standpoint of the Evangelist and explain the omissions of the story: and, most difficult task of all, to attain the secret of that arrangement, at first sight so strangely neglectful of chronology, which St Matthew, and indeed all the Evangelists, in their different ways, have used in order to give to the world the history of the Son of God. Thus will the key of the Gospels be placed in the learner's hands.

There are many reasons for taking the Book o Psalms for purposes of study first in order of the Old Testament books. The Psalms are the priest's chief devotional manual, and to have a good understanding of their language, subjects and dates, makes the divine office, and the sacred liturgy generally, both more easy to follow and more effective for raising the mind and heart to God. In the study of the Psalms, moreover, one is introduced gradually and naturally to the Hebrew mode of speech, to the philosophy and theology of the Jewish people, and to the geography and archæology of the Holy Land.

The Book of Isaias is the great book of the Old Testament. In poetry, sublimity and divine power none can be compared with it. The dispensation of the Incarnation, with all that concerns the Person of our Lord, His redeeming mercy and the prerogatives of His Church are there treated almost with the clearness of an Evangelist, but at the same time with the wide

grasp and the mysterious depth of the seer, with the emotion of a great and noble heart, and with a literary power which marks one of the world's greatest writers. In learning Isaias the student not only studies a great masterpiece of revelation and exposition, but also obtains the key to the whole prophetic literature of the Old Testament.

It seems to me that a course of this kind—first, "Introduction" for a couple of months, then the Epistle to the Romans, next St Matthew's Gospel, to be followed by the Psalms and by the Prophet Isaias—would be a Scripture course at once solid and attractive, and a good preparation for that lifelong Scripture study which should be the priest's ideal. To one who had mastered as much as this there would be few insuperable difficulties, few absolute novelties, in the Bible. To such a student the citations of his dogmatic text book would not be dry logs, but interesting trees of the forest; each one would tell its story and bring with it its atmosphere. To such a student the Scripture expressions found in his devotional books would bring back touching histories of God's mercy, holy associations with the saints of old, deep lessons of our Lord's life, stimulating memories of the heaving of St Paul's mind as he strove to find names for Christ's new creation.

I will conclude with a very brief reference to the Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, *Providentissimus Deus* (Nov. 18, 1893). This important pontifical document rather concerns the prelates of the Church and the rulers of the schools, than Church students directly. It urges the importance of promoting the study of the Bible, speaks of the requirements of the present day and of modern criticism, and lays down the true spirit in which a Catholic should interpret the sacred volume.

The Holy Father's language on the advantages of scriptural knowledge is very beautiful, and should be read by all. As to a plan of study, naturally none is here indicated. Pope Leo admits, and insists upon, the necessity of what is called "Introduction." But he goes on to say that the "more fruitful" part of the Scripture course is what is called "interpretation," that is, what I have described as studying the Scripture, and not studying *about* the Scripture. And then he adds that, seeing it is impossible that the whole Scripture should be gone through in the schools, the professors should strive to avoid both the disadvantage of merely sipping or tasting every book, and that of dwelling too long on any one portion. It is for the purpose of suggesting how this might be done that I have ventured on the observations here made. Let me end by echoing Pope Leo's wish, that all who are called to holy orders may grow daily more and more diligent in reading, meditating and explaining the written word of God.

CHAPTER XI

Science and the Priestly Office

IN the sixth chapter of Part III of the "Regula Pastoralis" St Gregory lays down the principles on which the pastor should admonish, on the one hand, the wise of this world (*sapientes hujus saeculi*), and on the other those who are unintelligent and stupid (*hebetes*). He notes that nothing can be made of the first class until you can bring them to trample on their wisdom and to become fools. This seems a hard saying. But we must

not suppose for a moment that St Gregory is here guilty of any exaggeration. By him wisdom and folly were estimated by the same tests as they were estimated by St Paul. No accumulation of knowledge is worthy to be called wisdom which does not include, and regulate itself by, divine revelation. "If any one among you seems to be wise according to this world, let him become a fool, that he may be (truly) wise," says St Paul.* The wise man, among the cultured peoples of the ancient world, was the man who could explain the enigmas of existence by his acquaintance with the words of other men and by his own mature thought. This sort of wisdom, which grew up more by talk and reflection than by any examination of facts, almost necessarily led a man to indulge in self-sufficiency. It was really self-inflation. Doubtless, among the wise writings of the ancients, there is much moral truth, keen insight and pregnant view. But such wisdom falls short in two respects: first of all, as is evident, by not taking into account the great external fact of divine revelation; and also, secondly, by fostering that temper which is especially and absolutely opposed to any intrusion on the mind's exercitations, of facts which are often not at all intellectual or sublime in their circumstances, like the facts which enforce revelation. A man who reasoned on the Deity in the strain of Plato was called wise, though he really lived in a fog, and was distended with the puffing up of his own intellectual activity; the man who believed that the Son of the Virgin Mary was the one infinite God, was called a fool, although he had objective fact to back up his conviction. This is the mean-

* 1 Cor. iii, 18.

ing of St Paul's and of St Gregory's insisting that the wise man must become a fool.

I have dwelt upon this view of wisdom or science because the kind of science with which the pastor of souls is confronted in the present age is in many respects of a totally different character. It has many drawbacks, but also some excellent qualities; and we should not be prudent if in correcting the former we also rejected the latter. It is not that the words of apostles and Fathers are really out of date; but there is now something more to be said—something that could not have occurred to teachers of the early Christian centuries.

What, then, is understood by Science in our day? and what is the attitude which the ecclesiastic should take up with respect to the scientific spirit?

In the modern world the term science is almost wholly confined to experimental and mathematical science; that is, to research into physical facts and the ordering of such facts—and perhaps we might add, the views or theories which seem to follow from such facts or to explain them. The pursuit of experimental knowledge, especially in this last century, has been carried on with great eagerness over the widest fields, and with conspicuous success; and the aims, the methods and the canons of this research have given rise to a specially modern mental temperament, which is called the scientific spirit.

No sensible man, as it seems to me, can fail to see that the modern scientific temperament possesses many valuable recommendations, and that it is our duty, as priests, not only in order to stand on a level with the leading minds of our epoch, but also for the sake of our own mental

culture, to welcome, to study, to adopt, some at least of the ways of modern science.

We find, for example, among the great names of physical science, that there is not one who has not been distinguished by exactness or *accuracy*. Physical research, whether chemical, biological, or astronomical, is carried on in regions almost beyond the ken of the senses, and depends on the verification of facts the most minute and difficult to grasp. Guess-work will not do here; general ideas are useless and misleading; measurements, proportions and quantities must be observed with the keenest eyesight, and noted with the most scrupulous nicety. Ecclesiastics, on the other hand, have to deal with laws, theories and reasonings. Their accuracy of observation and exactness of description are not in constant training. But this may easily become a great misfortune. In dealing with men, there are few mental defects which damage a priest with cultivated men so much as looseness of statement, a childish weakness of grasp in relating facts, the confusing of one name with another, and that general vagueness too often met with, as to dates, circumstances and localities

No man, certainly no priest, is expected to be omniscient. But there are subjects which a priest is expected to know, and on which he is expected to be at once ready and accurate. These subjects may be classed under four heads: the Faith, conduct, history and current topics. As to the Faith, it is noticeable how weak a sermon sometimes is because one has not accurate ideas on the dogmatic points involved; and how uncomfortable one sometimes is when one has to engage in a discussion with people of education. Take for example a discussion on the redeeming work of

our Lord—a discussion involving clear notions of the theandric operations, of merit and of satisfaction. What exasperation it is to find that you cannot instruct and satisfy your well-meaning and acute Protestant friend, because you cannot recall the definitions, the divisions and the distinctions of your text-book. You have read the subject, but you have not, till that moment, experienced the necessity for stamping the facts accurately on your mind. A young lawyer, a doctor, under analogous circumstances, would have his Acts of Parliament, or his anatomy, ready for use. A priest is equally, to say no more, bound to be well-up and accurate in all professional subjects.

If we consider "conduct," how necessary it is to be accurate in order to answer questions. I do not say that a priest is bound to answer every question put to him at tea-time or at a dinner-table—far from it. But he must be able to guide and advise as to the law and the fact.

History, again, is a field in which incalculable good may be done by any one who takes the trouble to be well read. Accurate history and scriptural study are now scientific; and any priest who is weak in chronology, who fails to distinguish periods, or who is unacquainted with the newest views, finds himself, in certain circles, outside of the discussion.

In general topics there are always one or two which call on the priest for accurate professional knowledge. Men talk, for example, of magnetism, hypnotism, thought-reading, soul-projection, the astral body. No priest is bound to know all about such things. But if he knows the facts accurately he at once secures attention. Even if he only lays down a clear and correct exposition of the

divine law and of the Church's teaching, he is listened to. But if he can only simper, utter crude negatives or launch juvenile exaggerations and commonplace abuse, he is dishonouring the profession in which he is bound to be an expert. We read, and read every day, and many hours a day. Yet accuracy is not a mark of the ecclesiastical mind. Can it be that we lack, in our holy vocation, that earnest purpose, that stern determination, which so generally distinguish those who are endeavouring to make their way in the world? Whatever the cause, it is a very damaging defect. The men of science—the Huxleys, the Tyndalls, the Spencers—reproach us with it. Even our cousins who have studied in medical, legal or technical schools, detect it in our conversation, and remain convinced that ecclesiasticism is childish trifling and has little relation with real knowledge.

I might name the spirit of *Caution* as another quality of the true scientific spirit. Our holy religion, with its divine certainty, leads us not only to believe but to be glad to believe—leads us not only to faith but to the piety of faith. This is a mental and spiritual bias which is fraught with much spiritual and even mental advantage. To accept the sayings of the saints, to incline to an acceptance of miracles, new or old, and of apparitions and revelations which have any *prima facie* authenticity, to delight in obeying not only our Holy Father the Pope but even the lowest of constituted authorities, and that even outside of their formal commands—such impulses are an important part of the spiritual life. On the other hand, scientific searchers into history proclaim loudly that the attitude of a critic is the only one worthy of a serious student; physicists insist that miracles

are unprovable, not to say impossible, and that no alleged miracle has ever stood the test of a scientific examination; whilst modern theories of loyalty and obedience are concerned solely with the external act. I do not say that the Church student must strive to find the mean between these two extremes. One is an extreme—or rather a mistaken and often sinful position; the other comes from the spirit of God. But we can learn two important lessons on this subject from the so-called scientific spirit. One is, not to force our own pious opinions upon others; and the second is, to cultivate greater caution than our forefathers, considering the age in which we live. As to the second, it may be said without fear of failing in spiritual leaning, that in these days piety is intended to be more hard-headed than it formerly was. In the ages of faith, and in many European countries much later than the ages of faith, there was a prevailing child-like credulity. This credulity, like that of children and uneducated persons, was not in itself religion or piety, although for the most part it came from piety. At the best, it was only the material cause of piety, just as an undeserving beggar may be the material recipient of the charity of a virtuous man. To be cautious is not to be less pious; it is only to be on the side of not allowing our piety to spread itself over too much ground. As to legends, pious stories, miracles and holy apparitions, I would always be pleased to see pious credulity rather than indifference on the part of the flock; on my own part, if they came to me on respectable *à priori* evidence and I had not time or opportunity to investigate them, I should desire to use them to inflame my piety, which they might do even if they were only illustrations and not facts. But if the necessity

arose, either in virtue of my office, or for the sake of non-Catholics, I should investigate them with all the keenness in my power; I should on no account force them on others, or think the worse of those who rejected them; and if Protestants inquired, I should try to impress upon them that it was entirely a matter of evidence—at the same time laying clearly before them the Catholic doctrine as to the miraculous. In all such matters the pastor of souls should cultivate the scientific spirit of caution—not by criticizing Catholic principle, and not by adopting suspicion and aversion as his habitual attitude; but by the cool, calm and somewhat reluctant admission that the acceptance of the facts depends almost entirely on the evidence in each case. In all matters, whether in questions of controversy, of history, or of actual occurrence, he should accustom himself to have recourse, in the company of honest, dispassionate and learned guides, to first-hand sources. He should be aware that, in these days, no man can get a hearing who does not go either to original sources or to the men who themselves have used them. He should cultivate absolute honesty in his instructions and exhortations to his people; not that he should go out of his way to open out the seamy side of Church history or of ecclesiastical transactions; but he should never say a thing that is false, however edifying it might prove, never impose as part of Catholic belief what is uncertain, and never propound views, especially such as tend to swell what we may call Catholic vanity, without having verified his facts and assured himself of their relevancy. In controversy he will probably find himself, from the nature of the case, more or less cautious. But it should never be forgotten that truth is

always most powerful when it is nearest to absolute accuracy.

For example, never to quote a Father of the Church without having read the very words in their context; never to quote a Luther or a Calvin or the Book of Common Prayer without having verified the exact words; never to describe the tenets or opinions of Anglicans, Wesleyans, Congregationalists, or any others, without good and respectable authority; these things should be elementary in controversy. It is certain that some priests learn a few patristic texts and a few sayings of the heretical leaders during their divinity course, out of some text-book or other, and use them as their stock in trade in after years. Now, the use of short and isolated texts is almost inevitably disastrous, and even dishonest. In nine cases out of ten, your opponent, if he knows the context, will be able, I do not say to refute you, but to raise a plausible objection to the relevancy of the passage. How many of our loud controversialists, in some local paper, have quoted, in support of the sacrifice of the Mass, that verse in the Epistle to the Hebrews (xiii, 10), "We have an altar of which they have no power to partake who serve the Tabernacle," and, not having read the context, have been flung on their backs by the retort of the local parson that the sacrifice here referred to was evidently the "sacrifice of praise," named five verses lower down! I do not imply that this retort is conclusive—far from it. But there was no need of exposing one's self to it. I might also refer to the well-known interpolations, or alleged interpolations, in St Cyprian, which are sometimes quoted by unwary controversialists in support of the Primacy of St Peter; they are sometimes cited in our books,

but it is unsafe to use them unless one reads first of all the notes of Baluze in the Benedictine edition of St Cyprian. Another instance in point is the well-known citation from St Augustine—*Roma locuta est—causa finita est.* These words, in this precise form, are not to be found in St Augustine. It is true there is a passage* which, to the unprejudiced mind, contains the truth which is here briefly and tersely expressed: "The results of two councils on this matter (casui) have been sent to the Apostolic See, and replies (rescripta) have come from them. The cause is ended. Would that the error may some time be ended." But unless the controversialist is aware how the matter stands, he exposes himself to the retort of an opponent like Dr Littledale† who says "[St Augustine] never said anything of the sort." And he adduces this as a proof that the Roman Church falsifies the Fathers!

We may sum up the good qualities of the scientific spirit, then, in such expressions as accuracy, caution, research, the taking of pains over things the most minute, and persevering hard work. And in recommending these intellectual virtues to the Church student, I am considering him, not so much as a private learner—for of this we have spoken in a former chapter—but rather as future teacher and preacher—as one who is an apostle of divine science; just as men of worldly science seldom work for their own equipment or their private and personal culture, but for the world at large, and the advancement of that progress of which they, in their own phrase, boast of being the apostles. To advance the kingdom of God, we must measure ourselves

* Sermon cxxxi, *de verbis Joannis* vi, no. 10.
† *Plain Reasons*, p. 105.

with our fellow-men. If in brain-power, in length of reach, in firmness of grasp, in solidity and in trustworthiness we are not fairly on the level of the best of the world's scientists, we shall make little way. As to their science itself, we are not obliged to learn it or to dabble in it. As we shall see just now, physical and allied sciences, whilst they have their place in a liberal education, may be fairly considered—in their wider aspects, and as generally treated and used by non-Catholic writers—to be jealous of religious truth, and even antagonistic to it. But the sterling mental qualities of many of its professors and students should be observed and emulated even by those who, like ourselves, do not depend for our religion on research nor for our happiness upon discovery.

I have said that physical science is jealous of religious truth, and even antagonistic to it. It cannot be denied that to live in certain atmospheres often means to catch certain diseases. Our minds have the tendency which Shakespeare noted—to become "steeped in the colours of their trade." All true facts of nature come from God, and all natural law is His ordinance; therefore there can never be real or direct antagonism between natural science and religion. On the other hand our human condition is this—that we must live for the unseen, the spiritual and the future; that what is visible, tangible and present, exercises a strong attraction over our faculties and our hearts; and that, nevertheless, the visible, the tangible and the present has no purpose or destiny except to serve as means or instruments to the moral and spiritual life. The antagonism between natural science and religious duty arises from the conditions of our existence, not from

science and religion *in se*. But it is none the less an important fact. I do not say that the investigation of matter necessarily causes materialistic views; that constant contact with natural law and continued familiarity with natural sequences and processes inevitably lead to a denial of the supernatural; that the study of the brain and nerves must make a man a determinist and a disbeliever in free-will; or that the contemplation of the orderly, silent, self-regulating universe must extinguish the idea of creation and make men atheists. But it cannot be doubted that there is a tendency of the kind here indicated. As a fact, many of our greatest scientists are materialists, reject the supernatural world, deny free-will, and virtually, if not formally, disbelieve in God. It is also a fact that many laymen who are Catholics, and who are more or less men of science, are so saturated with the study of natural phenomena that they by no means draw in its proper place the line between religion and superstition. They are inclined to insist on the nerve or brain conditions which are necessary for sensation and for intellectual thought, and to keep in the background the immaterial and spiritual element—an element of indefinitely higher value—which alone makes sensation or intellectual operation in its essence and formality. They do not reject revelation or miracles, but they dwell on the difficulty of proving divine interference, and find a pleasure in comparing the history of Christianity with the history of the early religions of the race, and pointing to the similarity of origin and development. They do not deny free-will or divine grace; but they are not averse, in moral matters, to dwelling upon the power and the force of circumstances and surroundings, and they often

write or speak as if grace were not an interior quality but only an external suggestion. They show themselves apologetic for the child-like piety of devout Catholics, and even ashamed of it. They talk of definitions, and councils, and creeds, and articles of faith—and profess that pious opinions have no attractions for them. These views are, after all, with a large proportion, only a temper, and not a dogmatic attitude. But they may undoubtedly be traced to the scientific spirit, as it is called. They may be traced to that exclusiveness, hardness, indevoutness and preoccupation which very naturally fall upon minds devoted to the study of nature, and strange to the study of God and things invisible.

And here we have the suggestion of the remedy; a remedy which should be in the hands of all pastors of souls—for the pastors are the salt of the earth. First of all, it will be a great misfortune to a young man if, during his divinity course, he gives himself up to physical science. Such a thing has been known, and therefore it is as well to mention it. In addition to the harm which vagaries of this kind do to divinity studies, it is certain that they are the sign of an unspiritual mind, and that they suggest doubts about a youth's true vocation. I do not say for one moment that Church students should not be acquainted with physiology, anatomy, chemistry or mechanics. I would go so far as to say that a considerable and accurate knowledge of the outlines of such branches of science is absolutely necessary for a priest, if he would preserve his credit and be of use to souls. But that is a very different thing.

Next, however, the principal point is, that in order to stem the evil that is wrought in the

world by the intolerant spirit of natural science, the pastor should know how to place before the world the laws and the glories of that other kingdom, out of our sight, under our feet and over our heads, the study of which has a still more valid right to be called a science than all the researches into nature, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop on the wall. The widespread modern idea is that the knowledge of God and the spiritual world is not science, but only mysticism. The priest must always correct that. If we did not start from facts as solid as the facts of geology or biology, we might admit that our divinity and our psychology were nothing but dreams. But we do begin with such facts; and that they are facts of consciousness, and not to be weighed or measured, may certainly make it a little more difficult to grasp them and appreciate them, but does not in any degree affect their objectiveness. We start with existence, with consciousness, with the clearly discernible distinction between the individual and the universal, with the observed laws of mind which stream on for all time, as visible on the surface of human history as the rivers which cross the continents of the earth, with duty, morality, justice, truth and responsibility—phenomena which are as real as anything that is produced by electricity, ether or oxygen. Having looked at these and studied them, aided by the intelligences which have thought them out in other ages, and by that divine revealing light which our earliest researches discover and prove to us, we are in a position to place ourselves outside of the whole physical universe with all its laws and movements. The scientists may dig and theorize, with eyes bent upon the earth, but

we have discovered that there is a heaven over their heads and also regions beyond their horizon. We can therefore warn them that their absolute laws are only conditional, that their conclusions must be checked by other forces and considerations than those which they find in the comparatively limited sphere which they have chosen. They speak with reverence of physical law, and its immutable pressure; they exult in a great generalization like that of continuity of being, of correlation of force; they point to the luminous effect of the theory of development; to the order, sequence and certainty with which nature, never hasting and never resting, works herself out in the centuries. But we, like those astronomers who see in their nightly vigils the planet or the comet which is crossing and disturbing some line of motion in the heavens, are aware that all these physical conditions only hold good within the physical universe, and that they must bow to the grander laws which are in play outside that universe. Physical law holds good; yes, unless spiritual law requires that it be suspended. The interference of God, in revelation and miracle, is outside of nature, unprovided for by natural law; but it is not against higher law; it is undoubtedly to be looked for by those who know of a universe outside of nature; and the mind's security in the constancy of the order of nature is in no way disturbed by these irruptions of more sublime forces which that mind can equally appreciate and to some extent understand. Nature is strong and impressive; but nature provides no answer to questions of first beginnings. Nature is beautiful, but no research has ever discovered in mere matter any explanation of life or self-motion. Nature may have

gone on for indefinite centuries in the process of her development, but an intimation not derived from nature warns us that there have been breaks in that development, and that both thought and animal life have burst into this universe from another sphere. And nature, vast and impressive as its kingdom may be, is only a throne for intelligence, a field for the career of the spirit, an episode in a duration which cannot be reckoned.

Views like this, which are essentially and diametrically opposed to the modern scientific spirit, are especially the views proper to God's servants who are pastors of His Church. But it is not enough to hold to them; they have to be impressed, first upon the flock and next upon the whole generation. And here is the task which the prophets and the preachers of all ages have found awaiting them—to make the world see the supernatural kingdom—the kingdom which is by excellence the kingdom of God. The prophets and the preachers have a grand theme. God and His attributes, the Incarnation and its stupendous circumstances, the dispensation of grace, the Church and its history—these subjects have inspired a John, a Paul, an Origen, an Augustine, a Bernard, a Thomas, a Francis of Sales, a Bossuet. And they are subjects which are equally powerful in the mouths of humbler men, who are called to speak to them, and are men of self-sacrifice and zeal. It has often been observed how Christianity, how the Catholic religion, tells, when it is pressed upon minds and hearts accurately, with conviction, and with tactful persistence. The sceptical professional man, the materially-minded tradesman, the unreflecting county-gentleman, the workman, the poor in general— not one but can be, and is, impressed,

moved, affected, by genuine words from a genuine man, about some aspect of that glorious revealed universe which it is our office to make known. It is not of much use to repeat formulas and phrases which are the stock in trade of the mere professional preacher—to utter them and leave them. The well-worn themes must be passed through a fresh minting, by being meditated in a mind which feels them. The sound form of words must by all means be adhered to; the more zealously, because nothing will supply a pastor with effective turns and stimulations like the immortal formulas of the Catholic faith. But he must speak to men, living, acting, sinning, aspiring after good. No wonder they are sunk in naturalism when they know so little about what is over their heads. No wonder they practically disbelieve in divine manifestation and operation, when they pass their lives among the blind, silent forces of the natural world, and have hardly heard more than the mere names of things invisible. Fénelon, in his "Dialogues," says that, in his time, hardly any preacher "instructed" his audience sufficiently. In those days, preachers really studied how to be effective. Their taste might in some things be false, but they did *prepare*. In our days, as in all days, preparation is a very relative term; but if there is one thing that ought to be prepared carefully, it is the daily, or weekly, exposition of the riches of religion. In no way can the so-called scientific spirit, which has infected so many good men, be more effectually combated.

St Augustine has three words * which might be adopted as a motto or device for the exponents of God's Kingdom. Their effort should be, he

* *De Doct. Christiana*, l. 4.

says, "ut veritas pateat, veritas placeat, veritas moveat." The truth—that is what we have to deal with; that is what we have to fight for. The truth which overlies and co-ordinates all other truths. The truth, which, in one respect, we have not to investigate or find out, because it is revealed and proposed, but which, in another, we have to spend our lives in penetrating and assimilating. As St Bernard says, a pastor should be a brimming fountain and not a mere water-pipe. Before a man can do any good to others he must be filled himself with wisdom, with understanding and with knowledge—three very different things, but each of them necessary, and each of them provided for in the education of a Church student in a Catholic college. *Declaratio sermonum tuorum illuminat, et intellectum dat parvulis. Os meum aperui, et attraxi spiritum.** In these words are described the work of ecclesiastical study, and also the effort which that study demands. It gives understanding to children. To those who in simplicity, with sincerity, with earnestness and with patience take up their course, there comes the intellectual endowment of the pastor—an endowment not wholly intellectual, yet truly and emphatically intellectual. As holy Job said, "They opened their mouths as to the evening rain; I shed upon them my word drop by drop." † Happy the flock which possesses a pastor so formed, so endowed, so possessed by the truths of the kingdom of God. That the Holy Spirit may possess the hearts and direct the study of all the sons of St Cuthbert is my earnest prayer.

* Ps. cxviii, 130-1. † Job xxix, 22.

SANCTI GREGORII MAGNI
REGULA PASTORALIS

SANCTI GREGORII MAGNI REGULA PASTORALIS

Pars Prima

Reverendissimo et sanctissimo fratri Joanni coepiscopo
Gregorius

PASTORALIS curae me pondera fugere delitescendo voluisse, benigna, frater carissime, atque humili intentione reprehendis; quae ne quibusdam levia esse videantur, praesentis libri stylo exprimo de eorum gravedine omne, quod penso: ut et haec, qui vacat, incaute non expetat; et qui incaute expetiit, adeptum se esse pertimescat. Quadripartita vero disputatione liber iste distinguitur, ut ad lectoris sui animum ordinatis allegationibus quasi quibusdam passibus gradiatur. Nam cum rerum necessitas exposcit, pensandum valde est, ad culmen quisque regiminis qualiter veniat; atque ad hoc rite perveniens, qualiter vivat; et bene vivens, qualiter doceat; et recte docens, infirmitatem suam quotidie quanta consideratione cognoscat: ne aut humilitas accessum fugiat; aut perventioni vita contradicat; aut vitam doctrina destituat; aut doctrinam praesumptio extollat. Prius ergo appetitum timor temperet: post autem magisterium, quod a non quaerente suscipitur, vita commendet: ac deinde necesse est, ut pastoris bonum, quod vivendo ostenditur, etiam loquendo propagetur. Ad extremum vero superest, ut perfecta quaeque opera consideratio propriae infirmitatis deprimat, ne haec ante occulti arbitri oculos tumor elationis

extinguat. Sed quia sunt plerique mihi imperitia similes, qui dum metiri se nesciunt, quae non didicerint, docere concupiscunt; qui pondus magisterii tanto levius aestimant, quanto vim magnitudinis illius ignorant; ab ipso libri hujus reprehendantur exordio: ut quia indocti ac praecipites doctrinae arcem tenere appetunt, a praecipitationis suae ausibus in ipsa locutionis nostrae janua repellantur.

CAPUT I

Ne venire imperiti ad magisterium audeant

NULLA ars doceri praesumitur, nisi intenta prius meditatione discatur. Ab imperitis ergo pastorale magisterium qua temeritate suscipitur, quando ars est artium regimen animarum! Quis autem cogitationum vulnera occultiora esse nesciat vulneribus viscerum? Et tamen saepe qui nequaquam spiritalia praecepta cognoverunt, cordis se medicos profiteri non metuunt: dum qui pigmentorum vim nesciunt, videri medici carnis erubescunt. Sed quia auctore Deo ad religionis reverentiam omne jam praesentis seculi culmen inclinatur; sunt nonnulli, qui intra sanctam Ecclesiam per speciem regiminis gloriam affectant honoris, videri doctores appetunt, transcendere ceteros concupiscunt, atque attestante Veritate, primas salutationes in foro, primos in coenis recubitus, primas in conventibus cathedras quaerunt:* qui susceptum curae pastoralis officium ministrare digne tanto magis nequeunt, quanto ad humilitatis magisterium ex sola elatione pervenerunt. Ipsa quippe in magisterio lingua confunditur, quando aliud discitur, et aliud docetur. Quos contra Dominus per

*Matt. xxiii, 6, 7.

prophetam queritur, dicens: "Ipsi regnaverunt, et non ex me: principes exstiterunt, et ego ignoravi."* Ex se namque, et non ex arbitrio summi Rectoris regnant, qui nullis fulti virtutibus nequaquam divinitus vocati, sed sua cupidine accensi, culmen regiminis rapiunt potius, quam assequuntur. Quos tamen internus judex et provehit et nescit: quia quos permittendo tolerat, profecto per judicium reprobationis ignorat. Unde ad se quibusdam et post miracula venientibus dicit: "Recedite a me operarii iniquitatis, nescio qui estis."† Pastorum imperitia voce Veritatis increpatur, cum per prophetam dicitur: "Ipsi pastores ignoraverunt intelligentiam."‡ Quos rursum Dominus detestatur, dicens: "Et tenentes legem nescierunt me."§ Et nesciri ergo se ab eis Veritas queritur, et nescire se principatum nescientium protestatur: quia profecto hi, qui ea, quae sunt Domini, nesciunt, a Domino nesciuntur, Paulo attestante qui ait: "Si quis autem ignorat, ignorabitur."‖ Quae nimirum pastorum saepe imperitia meritis congruit subjectorum: quia quamvis lumen scientiae sua culpa exigente non habeant, districto tamen judicio agitur, ut per eorum ignorantiam hi etiam, qui sequuntur, offendant. Hinc namque in Evangelio per semetipsam Veritas dicit: "Si caecus caeco ducatum praebeat, ambo in foveam cadunt."¶ Hinc Psalmista non optantis animo, sed prophetantis ministerio denunciat, dicens: "Obscurentur oculi eorum ne videant, et dorsum illorum semper incurva."** Oculi quippe sunt, qui in ipsa honoris summi facie positi, providendi itineris officium susceperunt: quibus hi nimirum, qui subsequenter inhaerent, dorsa nominantur. Obscuratis

* Osee viii, 4. † Luc. xiii, 27. ‡ Isa. lvi, 11.
§ Jer. ii, 8. ‖ 1 Cor. xiv, 38. ¶ Matt. xv, 14.
** Ps. lxviii, 24.

ergo oculis dorsum flectitur; quia cum lumen scientiae perdunt, qui praeunt, profecto ad portanda peccatorum curvantur onera, qui sequuntur.

CAPUT II

Ne locum regiminis subeant, qui vivendo non perficiunt quae meditando didicerunt

ET sunt nonnulli, qui solerti cura spiritalia praecepta perscrutantur: sed quae intelligendo penetrant, vivendo conculcant; repente docent, quae non opere, sed meditatione didicerunt: et quod verbis praedicant, moribus impugnant. Unde fit, ut cum pastor per abrupta graditur, ad praecipitium grex sequatur. Hinc namque per prophetam Dominus contra contemptibilem pastorum scientiam queritur, dicens: "Cum ipsi limpidissimam aquam biberetis, reliquam pedibus vestris turbabatis; et oves meae, quae conculcata pedibus vestris fuerant, pascebantur; et quae pedes vestri turbaverant, haec bibebant."* Aquam quippe limpidissimam pastores bibunt, cum fluenta veritatis recte intelligentes hauriunt. Sed eandem aquam pedibus perturbare est sanctae meditationis studia male vivendo corrumpere. Aquam scilicet eorum turbatam pedibus oves bibunt, cum subjecti quique non sectantur verba quae audiunt, sed sola quae conspiciunt exempla pravitatis imitantur. Qui cum dicta sitiunt, quia per opera pervertuntur, quasi corruptis fontibus in potibus lutum sumunt. Hinc quoque scriptum est per prophetam: "Laqueus ruinae populi mei sacerdotes mali." Hinc rursum de sacerdotibus Dominus per prophetam dicit: "Facti sunt domui Israel in offendiculum iniquitatis."† Nemo

* Ezech. xxxiv, 18, 19. † Osee v, 1 et ix, 8.

quippe amplius in Ecclesia nocet, quam qui perverse agens nomen vel ordinem sanctitatis habet. Delinquentem namque hunc redarguere nullus praesumit; et in exemplum culpa vehementer extenditur, quando pro reverentia ordinis peccator honoratur. Indigni autem quique tanti reatus pondera fugerent, si veritatis sententiam sollicita cordis aure pensarent, quae ait: "Qui scandalizaverit unum de pusillis istis, qui in me credunt, expedit ei, ut suspendatur mola asinaria in collo ejus, et demergatur in profundum maris."* Per molam quippe asinariam secularis vitae circuitus ac labor exprimitur: et per profundum maris extrema damnatio designatur. Qui ergo ad sanctitatis speciem deductus vel verbo ceteros destruit, vel exemplo, melius profecto fuerat, ut hunc ad mortem sub exteriori habitu terrena acta constringerent, quam sacra officia in culpa ceteris imitabilem demonstrarent; quia nimirum si solus caderet, utcunque hunc tolerabilior inferni poena cruciaret.

CAPUT III

De pondere regiminis; et quod adversa quaeque despicienda sunt, et prospera formidanda

HAEC itaque breviter diximus, ut quantum sit pondus regiminis monstraremus: ne temerarie sacra regimina, quisquis his impar est, audeat, et per concupiscentiam culminis ducatum suscipiat perditionis. Hinc enim pie Jacobus prohibet, dicens: "Nolite plures magistri fieri, fratres mei."† Hinc ipse Dei hominumque Mediator regnum percipere vitavit in terris, qui supernorum quoque spirituum scientiam sensumque transcendens ante secula regnat in coelis.

* Matt. xviii, 6. † Jac. iii, 1.

Scriptum quippe est: "Jesus ergo cum cognovisset quia venturi essent, ut raperent eum et facerent eum regem, fugit iterum in montem ipse solus."* Quis enim principari hominibus tam sine culpa potuisset, quam is, qui hos nimirum regeret, quos ipse creaverat? Sed quia idcirco in carne venerat, ut non solum nos per passionem redimeret, verum etiam per conversationem doceret, exemplum se sequentibus praebens rex fieri noluit, ad crucis vero patibulum sponte convenit; oblatam gloriam culminis fugit, poenam probrosae mortis appetiit, ut membra ejus videlicet discerent favores mundi fugere, terrores minime timere, pro veritate adversa diligere, prospera formidando declinare: quia et ista saepe per tumorem cor inquinant, et illa per dolorem purgant. In istis se animus erigit, in illis autem, etiamsi quando se erexerit, sternit. In istis sese homo obliviscitur, in illis vero ad sui memoriam nolens etiam coactusque revocatur In istis saepe et anteacta bona depereunt, in illis autem longi quoque temporis admissa terguntur. Nam plerumque adversitatis magisterio sub disciplina cor premitur: quod si ad regiminis culmen eruperit, in elationem protinus usu gloriae permutatur. Sic Saul, qui indignum se prius considerans fugerat, mox ut regni gubernacula suscepit, intumuit: honorari namque coram populo cupiens, dum reprehendi publice noluit, ipsum qui in regnum se unxerat, scidit†. Sic David auctoris judicio pene in cunctis actibus placens, mox ut pressurae pondere caruit, in tumorem vulneris erupit, factusque est in morte viri crudeliter rigidus, qui in appetitu feminae fuit enerviter fluxus: et qui malis ante noverat pie parcere, in bonorum quoque necem post didicit sine obstaculo retractationis anhelare.‡

* Joan vi, 15. † 1 Reg. x, 22; xv, 90. ‡ 2 Reg. xi, 3, 15.

Prius quippe ferire deprehensum persecutorem noluit, et post cum damno desudantis exercitus etiam devotum militem extinxit. Quem profecto ab electorum numero culpa longius raperet, nisi hunc ad veniam flagella revocassent.

CAPUT IV

Quod plerumque occupatio regiminis soliditatem aissipet mentis

SAEPE suscepta cura regiminis cor per diversa diverberat, et impar quisque invenitur ad singula, dum confusa mente dividitur ad multa. Unde quidam sapiens provide prohibet, dicens: "Fili, ne in multis sint actus tui,"* quia videlicet nequaquam plene in uniuscujusque operis ratione colligitur, dum mens per diversa partitur. Cumque foras per insolentem curam trahitur, a timoris intimi soliditate vacuatur; fit in exteriorum dispositione sollicita, et sui solummodo ignara, scit multa cogitare se nesciens. Nam cum plus quam necesse est se exterioribus implicat, quasi occupata in itinere obliviscitur quo tendebat: ita ut ab studio suae inquisitionis aliena, ne ipsa quidem, quae patitur, damna consideret, et per quanta delinquat ignoret. Neque enim peccare se Ezechias credidit, cum venientibus ad se alienigenis aromatum cellas ostendit: sed in damnationem secuturae prolis ex eo iram judicis pertulit, quod se facere licenter aestimavit†. Saepe dum multa suppetunt, dumque agi possunt, quae subjecti, quia acta sunt, admirentur, in cogitatione se animus elevat, et plene in se iram judicis provocat, quamvis per iniqua foras opera non erumpat. Intus quippe est, qui judicat, intus, quod

* Eccli xi, 10. † 4 Reg. xx, 13; Isa. xxxix, 4.

judicatur. Cum ergo in corde delinquimus, latet homines, quod apud nos agimus: sed tamen ipso judice teste peccamus. Neque enim rex Babyloniae tunc reus de elatione exstitit, cum ad elationis verba pervenit: quippe qui ore prophetico et ante, cum ab elatione tacuit, sententiam reprobationis audivit.* Culpam namque perpetratae superbiae jam ante deterserat, qui omnipotentem Deum, quem se offendisse reperit, cunctis sub se gentibus praedicavit. Sed post haec successu suae postestatis elevatus, dum magna se fecisse gauderet, cunctis prius in cogitatione se praetulit, et post adhuc tumidus dixit: "Nonne haec est Babylon magna, quam ego aedificavi in domum regni, et in robore fortitudinis meae, et in gloria decoris mei?"† Quae videlicet vox illius irae vindictam aperte pertulit, quam occulta elatio accendit. Nam districtus judex prius invisibiliter vidit, quod postea publice feriendo reprehendit. Unde et in irrationale animal hunc vertit, ab humana societate separavit, agri bestiis mutata mente conjunxit, ut districto videlicet justoque judicio homo quoque esse perderet, qui magnum se ultra homines aestimasset. Haec itaque proferentes non potestatem reprehendimus, sed ab appetitu illius cordis infirmitatem munimus, ne imperfecti quique culmen arripere regiminis audeant, et qui in planis stantes titubant, in praecipiti pedem ponant.

* Dan. iv, 16. † Dan. iv, 27.

CAPUT V

De his, qui in regiminis culmine prodesse exemplo virtutum possunt, sed quietem propriam spectando refugiunt

NAM sunt nonnulli, qui eximia virtutum dona percipiunt, et pro exercitatione ceterorum magnis muneribus exaltantur, qui studio castitatis mundi, abstinentiae robore validi, doctrinae dapibus referti, patientiae longanimitate humiles, auctoritatis fortitudine erecti, pietatis gratia benigni, justitiae severitate districti sunt. Qui nimirum culmen regiminum si vocati suscipere renuunt, ipsa sibi plerumque dona adimunt, quae non pro se tantummodo, sed etiam pro aliis acceperunt. Cumque sua et non aliorum lucra cogitant, ipsis se, quae privata habere appetunt, bonis privant. Hinc namque ad discipulos Veritas dicit: "Non potest civitas abscondi super montem posita: neque accendunt lucernam, et ponunt eam sub modio, sed super candelabrum, ut luceat omnibus, qui in domo sunt."* Hinc Petro ait: "Simon Joannis, amas me?" Qui cum se amare protinus respondisset, audivit: "Si diligis me, pasce oves meas."† Si ergo dilectionis est testimonium cura pastionis, quisquis virtutibus pollens gregem Dei renuit pascere, pastorem summum convincitur non amare. Hinc Paulus dicit: "Si Christus pro omnibus mortuus est, ergo omnes mortui sunt. Et si pro omnibus mortuus est, superest ut qui vivunt, jam non sibi vivant, sed ei, qui pro ipsis mortuus est et resurrexit."‡ Hinc Moyses ait, ut uxorem fra-

* Matt. v, 14, 15. † Joan. xxi, 16 s. ‡ 2 Cor. v, 15.

tris sine filiis defuncti superstes frater accipiat, atque ad nomen fratris filios gignat: quam si accipere forte renuerit, huic in faciem mulier exspuat, unumque ei pedem propinquus discalciet, ejusque habitaculum domum discalceati vocet.* Frater quippe defunctus ille est, qui post resurrectionis gloriam apparens dixit: "Ite, dicite fratribus meis."† Qui quasi sine filiis obiit, quia adhuc electorum suorum numerum non implevit. Hujus scilicet uxorem superstes frater sortiri praecipitur, quia dignum profecto est, ut cura sanctae Ecclesiae ei, qui hanc bene regere praevalet, imponatur. Cui nolenti in faciem mulier exspuit: quia quisquis ex muneribus, quae perceperit, prodesse aliis non curat, bonis quoque ejus sancta Ecclesia exprobrans, ei quasi in faciem salivam jactat. Cui ex uno pede calceamentum tollitur, ut discalceati domus vocetur. Scriptum quippe est: "Calceati pedes in praeparatione Evangelii pacis."‡ Si ergo ut nostram, sic curam proximi gerimus, utrumque pedem per calceamentum munimus. Qui vero suam cogitans utilitatem proximorum negligit, quasi unius pedis calceamentum cum dedecore amittit. Sunt itaque nonnulli, qui magnis, ut diximus, muneribus ditati, dum solius contemplationis studiis inardescunt, parere utilitati proximorum in praedicatione refugiunt, secretum quietis diligunt, secessum speculationis appetunt. De quo si districte judicentur, ex tantis procul dubio rei sunt, quantis venientes ad publicum prodesse potuerunt. Qua enim mente is, qui proximis profuturus enitesceret, utilitati ceterorum secretum praeponit suum, quando ipse summi Patris Unigenitus, ut multis prodesset, de sinu Patris egressus est ad publicum nostrum?

* Deut. xxv, 5. † Matt. xxviii, 10. ‡ Ephes. vi, 15.

CAPUT VI

Quod hi, qui pondus regiminis per humilitatem fugiunt, tunc vere sunt humiles, quum divinis judiciis non reluctantur

ET sunt nonnulli, qui ex sola humilitate refugiunt, ne eis, quibus se impares aestimant, praeferantur. Quorum profecto humilitas, si ceteris quoque virtutibus cingitur, tunc ante Dei oculos vera est, cum ad respuendum hoc, quod utiliter subire praecipitur, pertinax non est. Neque enim vere humilis est, qui superni nutus arbitrium, ut debeat praeesse, intelligit, et tamen praeesse contemnit. Sed divinis dispositionibus subditus, atque a vitio obstinationis alienus, cum sibi regiminis culmen imperatur, si jam donis praeventus est, quibus et aliis prosit, et ex corde debet fugere, et invitus obedire.

CAPUT VII

Quod nonnunquam praedicationis officium et nonnulli laudabiliter appetunt, et ad hoc nonnulli laudabiliter coacti pertrahuntur

QUAMVIS nonnunquam praedicationis officium et nonnulli laudabiliter appetunt, et ad hoc nonnulli laudabiliter coacti pertrahuntur: quod liquido cognoscimus, si duorum prophetantium facta pensamus, quorum unus, ut ad praedicandum mitti debuisset, sponte se praebuit, quo tamen alter pergere cum pavore recusavit. Isaias quippe Domino quaerenti, quem mitteret, ultro se obtulit, dicens: "Ecce ego, mitte me."* Jeremias

* Isa. vi, 8.

autem mittitur, et tamen ne mitti debeat, humiliter reluctatur, dicens: "A, a, a, Domine Deus, ecce nescio loqui, quia puer ego sum."* En ab utrisque exterius diversa vox prodiit, sed non a diverso fonte dilectionis emanavit. Duo quippe sunt praecepta caritatis, Dei videlicet amor et proximi. Per activam igitur vitam prodesse proximis cupiens Isaias officium praedicationis appetit: per contemplativam vero Jeremias amori conditoris sedulo inhaerere desiderans, ne mitti ad praedicandum debeat, contradicit. Quod ergo laudabiliter alter appetiit, hoc laudabiliter alter expavit. Iste ne tacitae contemplationis lucra loquendo perderet, ille ne damna studiosi operis tacendo sentiret. Sed hoc in utrisque est subtiliter intuendum, quia et is, qui recusavit, plene non restitit; et is, qui mitti voluit, ante per altaris calculum se purgatum vidit, ne aut non purgatus adire quisque sacra ministeria audeat, aut quem superna gratia elegit, sub humilitatis specie superbe contradicat. Quia igitur valde difficile est, purgatum se quemlibet posse cognoscere, praedicationis officium tutius declinatur: nec tamen declinari, ut diximus, pertinaciter debet, cum ad suscipiendum hoc superna voluntas agnoscitur. Quod Moyses utrumque miro opere explevit, qui praeesse tantae multitudini et noluit et obedivit. Superbus enim fortasse esset, si ducatum plebis innumerae sine trepidatione susciperet: et rursum superbus existeret, si auctoris imperio obedire recusaret. Utrobique ergo humilis, utrobique subjectus et praeesse populis semetipsum metiendo noluit, et tamen de imperantis viribus praesumendo consensit. Hinc ergo, hinc quique praecipites colligant, cum quanta culpa ex appetitu proprio ceteris prae-

* Jer. i, 6.

ferri non metuunt, si sancti viri plebium ducatum suscipere Deo etiam jubente timuerunt. Moyses suadente Domino trepidat, et infirmus quisque, ut honoris onus percipiat, anhelat; et qui ad casum valde urgetur ex propriis, humerum libenter opprimendus ponderibus submittit alienis; quae egit, ferre non valet, et auget, quod portet.

CAPUT VIII

De his, qui praeesse concupiscunt et ad usum suae libidinis instrumentum apostolici sermonis arripiunt

PLERUMQUE vero qui praeesse concupiscunt, ad usum suae libidinis instrumentum apostolici sermonis arripiunt, quo ait: "Si quis episcopatum desideret, bonum opus desiderat":* qui tamen laudans desiderium in pavorem vertit protinus, quod laudavit, cum repente subjungit: "Oportet autem episcopum irreprehensibilem esse."† Cumque virtutum necessaria subsequenter enumerat, quae sit irreprehensibilitas ipsa, manifestat. Et favet ergo ex desiderio, et terret ex praecepto, ac si aperte dicat: Laudo, quod quaeritis, sed prius discite quid quaeratis: ne, dum vosmetipsos metiri negligitis, tanto foedior vestra reprehensibilitas appareat, quanto et a cunctis conspici in honoris arce festinat. Magnus enim regendi artifex favoribus impellit, terroribus retrahit, ut auditores suos et descripto irreprehensibilitatis culmine restringat a superbia, et officium laudando, quod quaeritur, componat ad vitam. Quamvis notandum quod illo in tempore hoc dicitur, quo quisquis plebibus praeerat, primus ad martyrii tormenta ducebatur. Tunc ergo laudabile fuit

* 1 Tim. iii, 1. † Ibid. 2.

episcopatum quaerere, quando per hunc quemque dubium non erat ad supplicia graviora pervenire. Unde ipsum quoque episcopatus officium boni operis expressione definitur, cum dicitur: "Si quis episcopatum desiderat, bonum opus desiderat." Ipse ergo sibi testis est, quia episcopatum non appetit, qui non per hunc boni operis ministerium, sed honoris gloriam quaerit. Sacrum quippe officium non solum non diligit omnino, sed nescit, qui ad culmen regiminis anhelans in occulta meditatione cogitationis ceterorum subjectione pascitur, laude propria laetatur, ad honorem cor elevat, rerum affluentium abundantia exsultat. Mundi ergo lucrum quaeritur sub ejus honoris specie, quo mundi destrui lucra debuerunt. Cumque mens humilitatis culmen arripere ad elationem cogitat, quod foris appetit, intus immutat.

CAPUT IX

Quod mens praeesse volentium plerumque sibi ficta bonorum operum promissione blanditur

SED plerumque hi, qui subire magisterium pastorale cupiunt, nonnulla quoque bona opera animo proponunt: et quamvis hoc elationis intentione appetant, operaturos tamen se magna pertractant: fitque, ut aliud in imis intentio supprimat, aliud tractantis animo superficies cogitationis ostendat. Nam saepe sibi de se mens ipsa mentitur, et fingit se de bono opere amare, quod non amat, de mundi autem gloria non amare, quod amat: quae principari appetens fit ad hoc pavida cum quaerit, audax cum pervenerit. Tendens enim, ne non perveniat, trepidat: sed repente perveniens jure sibi hoc debitum, ad quod

pervenerit, putat. Cumque percepti principatus officio perfrui seculariter coeperit, libenter obliviscitur, quidquid religiose cogitavit. Unde necesse est, ut, cum cogitatio extra usum ducitur, protinus mentis oculus ad opera transacta revocetur: ac penset quisque, quid subjectus egerit, et repente cognoscit, si praelatus bona agere, quae proposuerit, possit, quia nequaquam valet in culmine humilitatem discere, qui in imis positus non desiit superbire. Nescit laudem, cum suppetit, fugere, qui ad hanc didicit, cum deesset, anhelare. Nequaquam vincere avaritiam potest, quando ad multorum sustentationem tenditur, is, cui sufficere propria nec soli potuerint. Ex anteacta ergo vita se quisque inveniat, ne in appetitu se culminis imago cogitationis illudat. Quamvis plerumque in occupatione regiminis ipse quoque boni operis usus perditur, qui in tranquillitate tenebatur: quia quieto mari recte navem et imperitus dirigit, turbato autem tempestatis fluctibus etiam peritus se nauta confundit. Quid namque est potestas culminis, nisi tempestas mentis? In qua semper cogitationum procellis navis cordis quatitur, huc illucque incessanter impellitur, ut per repentinos excessus oris et operis quasi per obviantia saxa frangatur. Inter haec itaque quid sequendum est, quid tenendum, nisi ut virtutibus pollens coactus ad regimen veniat, virtutibus vacuus nec coactus accedat? Ille si omnino renititur, caveat ne acceptam pecuniam in sudarium ligans de ejus occultatione judicetur. Pecuniam quippe in sudario ligare est percepta dona sub otio lenti torporis abscondere.* At contra, iste cum regimen appetit, attendat, ne per exemplum pravi operis pharisaeorum more ad ingressum regni tendentibus

* Matt. xxv, 18.

obstaculum fiat, qui juxta Magistri vocem nec ipsi intrant, nec alios intrare permittunt.* Cui considerandum quoque est, quia, cum causam populi electus praesul suscipit, quasi ad aegrum medicus accedit. Si ergo adhuc in ejus corpore passiones vivunt, qua praesumptione percussum mederi properat, qui in facie vulnus portat?

CAPUT X

Qualis quisque ad regimen venire debeat

ILLE igitur, ille modis omnibus debet ad exemplum vivendi pertrahi, qui cunctis carnis passionibus moriens jam spiritaliter vivit, qui prospera mundi postposuit, qui nulla adversa pertimescit, qui sola interna desiderat. Cujus intentioni bene congruens, nec omnino per imbecillitatem corpus, nec valde per contumaciam repugnat spiritus. Qui ad aliena cupienda non ducitur, sed propria largitur. Qui per pietatis viscera citius ad ignoscendum flectitur, sed nunquam plus quam deceat ignoscens ab arce rectitudinis inclinatur. Qui nulla illicita perpetrat, sed perpetrata ab aliis ut propria deplorat. Qui ex affectu cordis alienae infirmitati compatitur, sicque in bonis proximi sicut in suis provectibus laetatur. Qui ita se imitabilem ceteris in cunctis, quae agit, insinuat, ut inter eos non habeat, quod saltem de transactis erubescat. Qui sic studet vivere, ut proximorum quoque corda arentia doctrinae valeat fluentis irrigare. Qui orationis usu et experimento jam didicit, quod obtinere a Domino, quae poposcerit, possit, cui per effectus vocem jam quasi specialiter dicitur: "Adhuc loquente te dicam: Ecce adsum".† Si

* Matt. xxiii, 13. † Isa. lviii, 9.

enim fortasse quis veniat, ut pro se ad intercedendum nos apud potentem quempiam virum, qui sibi iratus, nobis vero est incognitus, ducat, protinus respondemus: Ad intercedendum venire non possumus, quia familiaritatis ejus notitiam non habemus. Si ergo homo apud hominem, de quo minime praesumit, fieri intercessor erubescit, qua mente apud Deum intercessionis locum pro populo arripit, qui familiarem se ejus gratiae esse per vitae meritum nescit? Aut ab eo quomodo aliis veniam postulat, qui, utrum sibi sit placatus, ignorat? Qua in re adhuc aliud est sollicitius formidandum, ne, qui placare posse iram creditur, hanc ipse ex proprio reatu mereatur. Cuncti enim liquido novimus, quia, cum is, qui displicet, ad intercedendum mittitur, irati animus ad deteriora provocatur. Qui ergo adhuc desideriis terrenis adstringitur, caveat, ne districti iram judicis gravius accendens, dum loco delectatur gloriae, fiat subditis auctor ruinae.

CAPUT XI

Qualis quisque ad regimen venire non debeat

SOLERTER ergo se quisque metiatur, ne locum regiminis assumere audeat, si adhuc in se vitium damnabiliter regnat: ne is, quem crimen depravat proprium, intercessor fieri appetat pro culpis aliorum. Hinc etenim superna voce ad Moysen dicitur: "Loquere ad Aaron: Homo de semine tuo per familias, qui habuerit maculam, non offeret panes Domino Deo suo, nec accedet ad ministerium ejus."* Ubi et repente subjungitur: "Si caecus fuerit, si claudus, si vel parvo, vel grandi et torto naso, si fracto pede, si

* Lev. xxi, 17.

manu, si gibbus, si lippus, si albuginem habens in oculo, si jugem scabiem, si impetiginem in corpore, vel ponderosus." * Caecus quippe est, qui supernae contemplationis lumen ignorat: qui praesentis vitae tenebris pressus, dum venturam lucem nequaquam diligendo conspicit, quo gressus operis porrigat, nescit. Hinc etenim prophetante Anna dicitur: "Pedes sanctorum suorum servabit, et impii in tenebris conticescent." † Claudus vero est, qui quidem, quo pergere debeat, aspicit, sed per infirmitatem mentis vitae viam perfecte non valet tenere, quam videt: quia ad virtutis statum dum fluxa consuetudo non erigitur, quo desiderium innititur, illuc gressus operis efficaciter non sequuntur. Hinc enim Paulus dicit: "Remissas manus et dissoluta genua erigite, et gressus rectos facite pedibus vestris: ut non claudicans quis erret, magis autem sanetur." ‡ Parvo autem naso est, qui ad tenendam mensuram discretionis idoneus non est. Naso quippe odores foetoresque discernimus. Recte ergo per nasum discretio exprimitur, per quam virtutes eligimus, delicta reprobamus. Unde et in laude sponsae dicitur: "Nasus tuus sicut turris, quae est in Libano:" § quia nimirum sancta Ecclesia, quae ex causis singulis tentamenta prodeant, per discretionem conspicit, et ventura vitiorum bella ex alto deprehendit. Sed sunt nonnulli, qui, dum aestimari hebetes nolunt, saepe se in quibusdam inquisitionibus plus quam necesse est exercentes, ex nimia subtilitate falluntur. Unde hic quoque subditur: "Vel grandi et torto naso." Nasus enim grandis et tortus est discretionis subtilitas immoderata, quae, dum plus quam decet excreverit, actionis suae recti-

* Lev. xxi, 18. † 1 Reg. ii, 9. ‡ Heb. xii, 12, 13.
§ Cant. vii, 4.

tudinem ipsa confundit. Fracto autem pede vel manu est, qui viam Dei pergere omnino non valet, atque a bonis actibus funditus exsors vacat: quatenus haec non ut claudus saltem cum infirmitate teneat, sed ab his omnimodo alienus existat. Gibbus vero est, quem terrenae sollicitudinis pondus deprimit, ne unquam ad superna respiciat, sed solis his, quæ in infimis calcantur, intendat. Qui et si quando aliquid ex bono patriae coelestis audierit, ad hoc nimirum perversae consuetudinis pondere praegravatus cordis faciem non attollit: quia cogitationis statum erigere non valet, quem terrenae usus sollicitudinis curvum tenet. Ex horum quippe specie psalmista dicit: "Incurvatus sum et humiliatus sum usquequaque." * Quorum culpam quoque per semetipsam Veritas reprobans ait: "Semen autem, quod in spinis cecidit, hi sunt, qui audierunt verbum, et a sollicitudinibus et divitiis et voluptatibus vitae euntes suffocantur, et non referunt fructum." † Lippus vero est, cujus quidem ingenium ad cognitionem veritatis emicat, sed tamen hoc carnalia opera obscurant. In lippis quippe oculis pupillae sanae sunt, sed humore defluente infirmatae palpebrae grossescunt: quorum quia infusione crebro atteruntur, etiam acies pupillae vitiatur. Et sunt nonnulli, quorum sensum carnalis vitae operatio sauciat, qui videre recta subtiliter per ingenium poterant, sed usu pravorum actuum caligant. Lippus itaque est, cujus sensum natura exacuit, sed conversationis pravitas confundit. Cui bene per angelum dicitur: "Collyrio inunge oculos tuos, ut videas." ‡ Collyrio quippe oculos, ut videamus, inungimus, cum ad cognoscendam veri luminis claritatem

* Ps. xxxviii, 8, sec. LXX. † Luc. viii, 14.
‡ Apoc. iii, 18.

intellectus nostri aciem medicamine bonae operationis adjuvamus. Albuginem vero habet in oculo, qui veritatis lucem videre non sinitur, quia arrogantia sapientiae seu justitiae caecatur. Pupilla namque oculi nigra videt, albuginem tolerans nil videt: quia videlicet sensus humanae cogitationis si stultum se peccatoremque intelligit, cognitionem intimae claritatis apprehendit. Si autem candorem sibi justitiae seu sapientiae tribuit, a luce se supernae cognitionis excludit: et eo claritatem veri luminis nequaquam penetrat, quo se apud se per arrogantiam exaltat: sicut de quibusdam dicitur: "Dicentes enim se esse sapientes, stulti facti sunt."* Jugem vero habet scabiem, cui carnis petulantia sine cessatione dominatur. In scabie etenim fervor viscerum ad cutem trahitur, per quam recte luxuria designatur: quia si cordis tentatio usque ad operationem prosilit, nimirum fervor intimus usque ad cutis scabiem prorumpit et foris jam corpus sauciat; quia dum in cogitatione voluptas non reprimitur, etiam in actione dominatur. Quasi enim cutis pruriginem Paulus curabat abstergere, cum dicebat: "Tentatio vos non apprehendat, nisi humana";† ac si aperte diceret: Humanum quidem est tentationem in corde perpeti, daemoniacum vero est in tentationis certamine et in operatione superari. Impetiginem quoque habet in corpore, quisquis avaritia vastatur in mente: quae si in parvis non compescitur, nimirum sine mensura dilatatur. Impetigo quippe sine dolore corpus occupat, et absque occupati taedio excrescens membrorum decorem foedat: quia et avaritia capti animum, dum quasi delectat, exulcerat; dum adipiscenda quaeque cogitationi objicit, ad inimicitias accendit, et dolorem in vulnere

* Rom. i, 22. † 1 Cor. x, 13.

non facit, quia aestuanti animo ex culpa abundantiam promittit. Sed decor membrorum perditur, quia aliarum quoque virtutum per hanc pulchritudo depravatur; et quasi totum corpus exasperat, quia per universa vitia animum supplantat, Paulo attestante, qui ait: "Radix omnium malorum est cupiditas." * Ponderosus vero est, qui turpitudinem non exercet opere, sed tamen ab hac cogitatione continua sine moderamine gravatur in mente: qui nequaquam quidem usque ad opus nefarium rapitur, sed ejus animus voluptate luxuriae sine ullo repugnationis obstaculo delectatur. Vitium quippe est ponderis, cum humor viscerum ad virilia labitur, quae profecto cum molestia dedecoris intumescunt. Ponderosus ergo est, qui totis cogitationibus ad lasciviam defluens pondus turpitudinis gestat in corde: et quamvis prava non exerceat opere, ab his tamen non evellitur mente. Nec ad usum boni operis in aperto valet assurgere, quia gravat hunc in abditis pondus turpe. Quisquis ergo quolibet horum vitio subigitur, panes Domino offerre prohibetur: ne profecto diluere aliena delicta non valeat is, quem adhuc propria devastant.

Quia igitur paucis, ad pastorale magisterium dignus qualiter veniat, atque hoc indignus qualiter pertimescat, ostendimus: nunc is, qui ad illud digne pervenerit, in eo qualiter vivere debeat, demonstremus.

* 1 Tim. vi, 10.

Pars Secunda

De Vita Pastoris

CAPUT I

Is qui ad regimen ordinate perbenerit, qualem se in ipso regimine debeat exhibere

TANTUM debet actionem populi actio transcendere praesulis, quantum distare solet a grege vita pastoris. Oportet namque, ut metiri sollicite studeat, quanta tenendae rectitudinis necessitate constringitur, sub cujus aestimatione populus grex vocatur. Sit ergo necesse est cogitatione mundus, actione praecipuus, discretus in silentio, utilis in verbo, singulis compassione proximus, prae cunctis contemplatione suspensus, bene agentibus per humilitatem socius, contra delinquentium vitia per zelum justitiae erectus, internorum curam in exteriorum occupatione non minuens, exteriorum providentiam in internorum sollicitudine non relinquens. Sed haec, quae breviter enumeranda perstrinximus, paulo latius replicando disseramus.

CAPUT II

Ut rector cogitatione sit mundus

RECTOR semper cogitatione sit mundus, quatenus nulla hunc immunditia polluat, qui hoc suscepit officii, ut in alienis quoque cordibus pollutionis maculas tergat: quia necesse est, ut esse

munda studeat manus, quae diluere sordes curat, ne tacta quaeque deterius inquinet, si sordida insequens lutum tenet. Hinc namque per prophetam dicitur: "Mundamini, qui fertis vasa Domini."* Domini etenim vasa ferunt, qui proximorum animas ad aeterna sacraria perducendas in suae conversationis fide suscipiunt. Apud semetipsos ergo quantum debeant mundari conspiciant, qui ad aeternitatis templum vasa viventia in sinu propriae sponsionis portant. Hinc divina voce praecipitur, ut in Aaron pectore rationale judicii vittis ligantibus imprimatur; quatenus sacerdotale cor nequaquam cogitationes fluxae possideant, sed ratio sola constringat; nec indiscretum quid vel inutile cogitet, qui ad exemplum aliis constitutus ex gravitate vitae semper debet ostendere, quantam in pectore rationem portet.† In quo etiam rationali vigilanter adjungitur, ut duodecim patriarcharum nomina describantur. Adscriptos etenim patres semper in pectore ferre, est antiquorum vitam sine intermissione cogitare. Nam tunc sacerdos irreprehensibiliter graditur, cum exempla patrum praecedentium indesinenter intuetur, cum sanctorum vestigia sine cessatione considerat, et cogitationes illicitas deprimit, ne extra ordinis limitem operis pedem tendat. Quod bene etiam rationale judicii vocatur; quia debet rector subtili semper examine bona malaque discernere, et quae vel quibus, quando vel qualiter congruant, studiose cogitare, nihilque proprium quaerere, sed sua commoda propinquorum bona deputare. Unde illic scriptum est: "Pones autem in rationali judicii doctrinam et veritatem, quae erunt in pectore Aaron, quando ingredietur coram Domino, et gestabit judicium filiorum Israel in pectore suo in conspectu

* Isa. lii, 11. † Exod. xxviii, 15.

Domini semper."* Sacerdoti quippe judicium filiorum Israel in pectore coram Domini conspectu gestare, et subjectorum causas pro sola interni judicis intentione discutere, ut nihil se ei humanitatis admisceat in hoc, quod divina positus vice dispensat, ne correptionis studia privatus dolor exasperet. Cumque contra aliena vitia aemulator ostenditur, quae sua sunt, exsequatur, ne tranquillitatem judicii aut latens invidia maculet, aut praeceps ira perturbet. Sed dum consideratur terror ejus, qui super omnia praesidet, videlicet judicis intimi, non sine magno regantur timore subjecti. Qui nimirum timor dum mentem rectoris humiliat, purgat, ne hanc aut praesumptio spiritus levet, aut carnis delectatio inquinet, aut per terrenarum rerum cupidinem importunitas pulvereae cogitationis obscuret; quae tamen non pulsare rectoris animum nequeunt; sed festinare necesse est, ut repugnatione vincantur; ne vitium, quod per suggestionem tentat, mollitie delectationis subigat: cumque haec ab animo tarde repellitur, mucrone consensus occidat.

CAPUT III

Ut rector semper sit operatione praecipuus

SIT rector operatione praecipuus, ut vitae viam subditis vivendo denunciet, et grex, qui pastoris vocem moresque sequitur, per exempla melius quam per verba gradiatur. Qui enim loci sui necessitate exigitur summa dicere, hac eadem necessitate compellitur summa monstrare. Illa namque vox libentius auditorum cor penetrat, quam dicentis vita commendat: quia, quod loquendo imperat, ostendendo adjuvat, ut fiat. Hinc enim per pro-

* Exod. xxviii, 30.

phetam dicitur: "Super montem excelsum ascende tu, qui evangelizas Sion."* Ut videlicet qui coelesti praedicatione utitur, ima jam terrenorum operum deserens, in rerum culmine stare videatur, tantoque facilius subditos ad meliora pertrahat, quanto per vitae meritum de supernis clamat. Hinc divina lege armum sacerdos in sacrificium et dextrum accipit et separatum,† ut non solum sit ejus operatio utilis sed etiam singularis: nec inter malos tantummodo, quae recta sunt, faciat, sed bene quoque operantes subditos, sicut honore ordinis superat, ita etiam morum virtute transcendat. Cui in esu quoque pectusculum cum armo tribuitur, ut quod de sacrificio praecipitur sumere, hoc de semetipso auctori discat immolare. Et non solum pectore, quae recta sunt, cogitet, sed spectatores suos ad sublimia armo operis invitet, nulla prospera praesentis vitae appetat, nulla adversa pertimescat, blandimenta mundi respecto intimo terrore despiciat, terrores autem considerato internae dulcedinis blandimento contemnat. Unde supernae quoque vocis imperio in utroque humero sacerdos velamine superhumeralis adstringitur,‡ ut contra adversa ac prospera virtutum semper ornamento muniatur: quatenus juxta vocem Pauli § per arma justitiae a dextris sinistrisque gradiens, cum ad sola, quae interiora sunt, nititur, in nullo delectationis infimae latere flectatur. Non hunc prospera elevent, non adversa perturbent, non blanda usque ad voluptatem demulceant, non aspera ad desperationem premant: ut dum nullis passionibus intentionem mentis humiliat, quanta in utroque humero superhumeralis pulchritudine tegatur, ostendat. Quod recte etiam superhumerale ex auro, hyacintho, purpura, bis

* Isa. xl, 9. † Exod. xxix, 22. ‡ Exod. xxix, 5.
§ 2 Cor. vi, 7.

tincto cocco, et torta fieri bysso praecipitur,* ut quanta sacerdos clarescere virtutum diversitate debeat, demonstretur. In sacerdotis quippe habitu ante omnia aurum fulget, ut in eo intellectus sapientiae principaliter emicet. Cui hyacinthus, qui aëreo colore resplendet, adjungitur, ut per omne quod intelligendo penetrat, non ad favores infimos, sed ad amorem coelestium surgat, ne dum suis incautus laudibus capitur, ipso etiam veritatis intellectu vacuetur. Auro quoque et hyacintho purpura permiscetur; ut videlicet sacerdotale cor, cum summa, quae praedicat, sperat, in semetipso etiam suggestiones vitiorum reprimat, eisque velut ex regia potestate contradicat, quatenus nobilitatem semper intimae regenerationis aspiciat, et coelestis regni sibi habitum moribus defendat. De hac quippe nobilitate Spiritus per Petrum dicitur: "Vos autem genus electum, regale sacerdotium."† De hac etiam potestate, qua vitia subigimus, Joannis voce roboramur, qui ait: "Quotquot autem receperunt eum, dedit eis potestatem filios Dei fieri."‡ Hanc dignitatem fortitudinis psalmista considerat, dicens: "Mihi autem nimis honorificati sunt amici tui Deus, nimis confortatus est principatus eorum."§ Quia nimirum sanctorum mens principaliter in summis erigitur, cum exterius perpeti abjecta cernuntur. Auro etiam, hyacintho ac purpurae bis tinctus coccus adjungitur; ut ante interni judicis oculos omnia virtutum bona ex caritate decorentur, et cuncta, quae coram hominibus rutilant, haec in conspectu occulti arbitri flamma intimi amoris accendat. Quae scilicet caritas, quia Deum simul ac proximum diligit, quasi ex duplici tinctura fulgescit. Qui igitur

* Exod. xxviii, 8. † 1 Pet. ii, 9. ‡ Ibid. i, 12.
§ Ps. cxxxviii, 17.

sic ad auctoris speciem anhelat, ut proximorum curam negligat, vel sic proximorum curam exsequitur, ut a divino amore torpescat: quia unum horum quodlibet negligit, in superhumeralis ornamento habere coccum bis tinctum nescit. Sed cum mens ad praecepta caritatis tenditur, restat procul dubio, ut per abstinentiam caro maceretur. Unde et bis tincto cocco torta byssus adjungitur. De terra etenim byssus nitenti specie oritur. Et quid per byssum, nisi candens decore munditiae corporalis castitas designatur? Quae videlicet torta pulchritudini superhumeralis innectitur; quia tunc castimonia ad perfectum munditiae candorem ducitur, cum per abstinentiam caro fatigatur. Cumque inter virtutes ceteras etiam afflictae carnis meritum proficit, quasi in diversa superhumeralis specie byssus torta candescit.

CAPUT IV

Ut sit rector discretus in silentio, utilis in verbo

SIT rector discretus in silentio, utilis in verbo, ne aut tacenda proferat, aut proferenda reticescat. Nam sicut incauta locutio in errorem pertrahit, ita indiscretum silentium hos, qui erudiri poterant, in errore derelinquit. Saepe namque rectores improvidi humanam amittere gratiam formidantes loqui libere recta pertimescunt, et juxta veritatis vocem nequaquam jam gregis custodiae pastorum studio, sed mercenariorum vice deserviunt: quia veniente lupo fugiunt, dum se sub silentio abscondunt.* Hinc namque eos per prophetam Dominus increpat, dicens: "Canes muti non valentes latrare." † Hinc rursum que-

* Joan. x, 12. † Isa. lvi, 10.

ritur dicens: "Non ascendistis ex adverso, nec opposuistis murum pro domo Israel, ut staretis in praelio in die Domini." * Ex adverso quippe ascendere, est pro defensione gregis voce libera hujus mundi potestatibus contraire. Et in die Domini in praelio stare, est pravis decertantibus ex justitiae amore resistere. Pastori enim recta timuisse dicere, quid est aliud quam tacendo terga praebuisse? Qui nimirum si pro grege se objicit, murum pro domo Israel hostibus opponit. Hinc rursum delinquenti populo dicitur: "Prophetae tui viderunt tibi falsa et stulta, nec aperiebant iniquitatem tuam, ut te ad poenitentiam provocarent." † Prophetae quippe in sacro eloquio nonnunquam doctores vocantur, qui dum fugitiva esse praesentia indicant, quae sunt ventura manifestant. Quos divinus sermo falsa videre redarguit; quia dum corripere culpas metuunt, incassum delinquentibus promissa securitate blandiuntur; qui iniquitatem peccantium nequaquam aperiunt, quia ab increpationis voce conticescunt. Clavis quippe apertionis est sermo correptionis; quia increpando culpam detegit, quam saepe nescit ipse etiam, qui perpetravit. Hinc Paulus ait: "Ut potens sit exhortari in doctrina sana, et eos, qui contradicunt, arguere." ‡ Hinc per Malachiam dicitur: "Labia sacerdotis custodiunt scientiam, et legem requirent ex ore ejus, quia angelus Domini exercituum est." § Hinc per Isaiam Dominus admonet, dicens: "Clama, ne cesses, quasi tuba exalta vocem tuam." ‖ Praeconis quippe officium suscipit, quisquis ad sacerdotium accedit, ut ante adventum judicis, qui terribiliter sequitur, ipse scilicet clamando gradiatur. Sacerdos ergo si praedicationis est ne-

* Ezec. xiii, 5. † Thren. ii, 14. ‡ Tit. i, 9.
§ Tit. ii, 7. ‖ lviii, 1.

scius, quam clamoris vocem daturus est praeco mutus? Hinc est enim, quod super pastores primos in linguarum specie Spiritus sanctus insedit:* quia nimirum, quos repleverit, de se protinus loquentes facit. Hinc Moysi praecipitur, ut tabernaculum sacerdos ingrediens tintinnabulis ambiatur,† ut videlicet voces praedicationis habeat, ne superni spectatoris judicium ex silentio offendat. Scriptum quippe est: "Ut audiatur sonitus, quando ingreditur et egreditur sanctuarium in conspectu Domini, et non moriatur."‡ Sacerdos namque ingrediens vel egrediens moritur, si de eo sonitus non auditur: quia iram contra se occulti judicis exigit, si sine praedicationis sonitu incedit. Apte autem tintinnabula vestimentis illius describuntur inserta. Vestimenta etenim sacerdotis quid aliud quam recta opera debemus accipere? Propheta attestante qui ait: "Sacerdotes tui induantur justitiam."§ Vestimentis itaque illius tintinnabula inhaerent, ut vitae viam cum linguae sonitu ipsa quoque sacerdotis opera clament. Sed cum rector se ad loquendum praeparat, sub quanto cautelae studio loquatur, attendat, ne, si inordinate ad loquendum rapitur, erroris vulnere audientium corda feriantur, et cum fortasse sapiens videri desiderat, unitatis compagem insipienter abscidat. Hinc namque Veritas dicit: "Habete sal in vobis, et pacem habete inter vos."‖ Per sal quippe verbi sapientia designatur. Qui igitur loqui sapienter nititur, magnopere metuat, ne ejus eloquio audientium unitas confundatur. Hinc Paulus ait: "Non plus sapere, quam oportet sapere, sed sapere ad sobrietatem."¶ Hinc in sacerdotis veste juxta divinam vocem tintinnabulis mala

* Acts. ii, 3. † Exod, xxviii, 33. ‡ Ibid., 35.
§ Ps. cxxxi, 9. ‖ Marc. ix, 49. ¶ Rom. xii, 3.

punica conjunguntur.* Quid enim per mala punica, nisi fidei unitas designatur? Nam sicut in malo punico uno exterius cortice multa interius grana muniuntur: sic innumeros sanctae Ecclesiae populos unitas fidei contegit, quos intus diversitas meritorum tenet. Ne igitur rector incautus ad loquendum proruat, hoc quod jam praemisimus, per semetipsam Veritas discipulis clamat: "Habete sal in vobis, et pacem habete inter vos." † Ac si figurate per habitum sacerdotis dicat: Mala punica tintinnabulis jungite, ut per omne, quod dicitis, unitatem fidei cauta observatione teneatis. Providendum quoque est sollicita intentione rectoribus, ut ab eis non solum prava nullo modo, sed ne recta quidem nimie et inordinate proferantur: quia saepe dictorum virtus perditur, cum apud corda audientium loquacitatis incauta importunitate laevigatur, et auctorem suum haec eadem loquacitas inquinat, quae servire auditoribus ad usum profectus ignorat. Unde bene per Moysen dicitur: "Vir, qui fluxum seminis patitur, immundus erit." ‡ In mente quippe audientium semen secuturae cogitationis est auditae qualitas locutionis, quia dum per aurem sermo concipitur, cogitatio in mente generatur. Unde et ab hujus mundi sapientibus praedicator egregius seminiverbius est vocatus. Qui ergo fluxum seminis sustinet, immundus asseritur, quia multiloquio subditus ex eo se inquinat, quod si ordinate promeret, prolem rectae cogitationis edere in audientium corda potuisset: dumque incautus per loquacitatem diffluit, non ad usum generis, sed ad immunditiam semen effundit. Unde Paulus quoque cum discipulum de instantia praedicationis admoneret, dicens: "Testificor coram Deo et

* Exod. xxviii, 34. † Marc. ix, 49. ‡ Lev. xv, 2.

Christo Jesu, qui judicaturus est vivos et mortuos, per adventum ipsius et regnum ejus, praedica verbum, insta opportune, importune":* dicturus "importune" praemisit "opportune," quia scilicet apud auditoris mentem ipsa sua vilitate se destruit, si habere importunitas opportunitatem nescit.

CAPUT V

Ut sit rector singulis compassione proximus, prae cunctis contemplatione suspensus

SIT rector singulis compassione proximus, prae cunctis contemplatione suspensus, ut et per pietatis viscera in se infirmitatem ceterorum transferat, et per speculationis altitudinem semetipsum quoque invisibilia appetendo transcendat, ne aut alta petens proximorum infirma despiciat, aut infirmis proximorum congruens appetere alta derelinquat. Hinc est namque quod Paulus in paradisum ducitur, coelique tertii secreta rimatur,† et tamen illa invisibilium contemplatione suspensus ad cubile carnalium aciem mentis revocat, atque in occultis suis qualiter debeant conversari dispensat, dicens: "Propter fornicationem autem unusquisque suam uxorem habeat, et unaquaeque suum virum habeat. Uxori vir debitum reddat: similiter autem et uxor viro." ‡ Et paulo post: "Nolite fraudare invicem, nisi forte ex consensu ad tempus, ut vacetis orationi: et iterum revertimini in idipsum, ne tentet vos satanas." § Ecce jam coelestibus secretis inseritur, et tamen per condescensionis viscera carnalium cubile perscrutatur, et quem sublevatus ad

* 2 Tim. iv, 1. † 2 Cor. xii, 3. ‡ 1 Cor. vii, 2. § Ibid., 5.

invisibilia erigit, hunc miseratus ad secreta infirmantium oculum cordis flectit. Coelum contemplatione transcendit, nec tamen stratum carnalium sollicitudine deserit: quia compage caritatis summis simul et infimis junctus, et in semetipso virtute spiritus ad alta valenter rapitur, et pietate in aliis aequanimiter infirmatur. Hinc etenim dicit: "Quis infirmatur, et ego non infirmor? quis scandalizatur, et ego non uror?"* Hinc rursus ait: "Factus sum Judaeis tamquam Judaeus."† Quod videlicet exhibebat non amittendo fidem, sed extendendo pietatem, ut in se personam infidelium transfigurans ex semetipso disceret, qualiter aliis misereri debuisset: quatenus hoc illis impenderet, quod sibi ipse, si ita esset, impendi recte voluisset. Hinc iterum dicit: "Sive mente excedimus, Deo: sive sobrii sumus, vobis";‡ quia et semetipsum noverat contemplando transcendere, et eundem se auditoribus condescendendo temperare. Hinc Jacob Domino desuper innitente, et uncto deorsum lapide, ascendentes ac descendentes angelos vidit:§ quia scilicet praedicatores recti non solum sursum sanctum caput Ecclesiae, videlicet Dominum contemplando appetunt, sed deorsum quoque ad membra illius miserando descendunt. Hinc Moyses crebro tabernaculum intrat et exit, et qui intus in contemplationem rapitur, foris infirmantium negotiis urgetur. Intus Dei arcana considerat, foris onera carnalium portat. Qui de rebus quoque dubiis semper ad tabernaculum recurrit, coram testamenti arca Dominum consulit; exemplum procul dubio rectoribus praebens, ut cum foris ambigunt, quid disponant, ad mentem semper quasi ad tabernaculum redeant, et velut co-

* 2 Cor. xi, 29. † 1 Cor. ix, 20. ‡ 2 Cor. v, 13.
§ Gen. xxviii, 12.

ram testamenti arca Dominum consulant, si de his, in quibus dubitant, apud semetipsos intus sacri eloquii paginas requirant. Hinc ipsa Veritas per susceptionem nostrae humanitatis nobis ostensa in monte orationi inhaeret, miracula in urbibus exercet,* imitationis videlicet viam bonis rectoribus sternens, ut, etsi jam summa contemplando appetunt, necessitatibus tamen infirmantium compatiendo misceantur: quia tunc ad alta caritas mirabiliter surgit, cum ad ima proximorum se misericorditer attrahit; et quo benigne descendit ad infima, valenter recurrit ad summa. Tales autem sese, qui praesunt, exhibeant, quibus subjecti occulta quoque sua prodere non erubescant; ut, cum tentationum fluctus parvuli tolerant, ad pastoris mentem quasi ad matris sinum recurrant, et hoc, quod se inquinari pulsantis culpae sordibus praevident, exhortationis ejus solatio ac lacrymis orationis lavent. Unde et ante fores templi ad abluendas ingredientium manus mare aeneum, id est, luterem duodecim boves portant: qui quidem facie exterius eminent, sed ex posterioribus latent.† Quid namque duodecim bobus nisi universus pastorum ordo designatur? De quibus Paulo disserente lex dicit: "Non obturabis os bovi trituranti."‡ Quorum quidem nos aperta opera cernimus, sed apud districtum judicem quae illos posterius maneant in occulta retributione, nescimus. Qui tamen cum condescensionis suae patientiam diluendis proximorum confessionibus praeparant, velut ante fores templi luterem portant, ut, quisquis intrare aeternitatis januam nititur, tentationes suas menti pastoris indicet, et quasi in boum lutere cogitationis vel operis manus lavet. Et fit plerumque, ut dum rectoris animus aliena tentamenta conde-

* Luc. vi, 12. † 3 Reg. vii, 25. ‡ 1 Cor. ix, 9; Deut. xxv, 4.

scendendo cognoscit, auditis tentationibus etiam ipse pulsetur: quia et hac eadem, per quam populi multitudo diluitur, aqua procul dubio luteris inquinatur. Nam dum sordes diluentium suscipit, quasi suae munditiae serenitatem perdit. Sed haec nequaquam pastori timenda sunt, quia Deo subtiliter cuncta pensante tanto facilius a sua eripitur, quanto misericordius ex aliena tentatione fatigatur.

CAPUT VI

Ut sit rector bene agentibus per humilitatem socius, contra delinquentium vitia per zelum justitiae erectus

SIT rector bene agentibus per humilitatem socius, contra delinquentium vitia per zelum justitiae erectus; ut et bonis in nullo se praeferat, et cum pravorum culpa exigit, potestatem protinus sui prioratus agnoscat: quatenus et honore suppresso aequalem se subditis bene viventibus deputet, et erga perversos jura rectitudinis exercere non formidet. Nam sicut in libris Moralibus* dixisse me memini, liquet, quod omnes homines natura aequales genuit, sed variante meritorum ordine alios aliis culpa postponit. Ipsa autem diversitas, quae accessit ex vitio, divino judicio dispensatur, ut quia omnis homo aeque stare non valet, alter regatur ab altero. Unde cuncti, qui praesunt, non in se potestatem debent ordinis, sed aequalitatem pensare conditionis: nec praeesse se hominibus gaudeant, sed prodesse. Antiqui etenim patres nostri non reges hominum, sed pastores pecorum fuisse memorantur. Et cum Noe Dominus filiisque ejus diceret:

* l. xxi, n. 22.

"Crescite et multiplicamini, et replete terram," protinus adjunxit: "Et terror vester ac tremor sit super cuncta animalia terrae."* Quorum videlicet terror ac tremor, quia esse super animalia terrae praecipitur, profecto esse super homines prohibetur. Homo quippe brutis animalibus, non autem hominibus ceteris natura praelatus est, et idcirco ei dicitur, ut ab animalibus et non ab hominibus timeatur, quia contra naturam superbire est, ab aequali velle timeri. Et tamen necesse est, ut rectores a subditis timeantur, quando ab eis Deum minime timeri deprehendunt, ut humana saltem formidine peccare metuant, qui divina judicia non formidant. Nequaquam namque praepositi ex hoc quaesito timore superbiunt, in quo non suam gloriam, sed subditorum justitiam quaerunt. In eo enim, quod metum sibi a perverse viventibus exigunt, quasi non hominibus, sed animalibus dominantur, quia videlicet, ex qua parte bestiales sunt subditi, ex ea debent etiam formidini jacere substrati.

Sed plerumque rector eo ipso, quo ceteris praeeminet, elatione cogitationis intumescit, et dum ad usum cuncta subjacent, dum ad votum velociter jussa complentur, dum omnes subditi, si qua bene gesta sunt, laudibus efferunt, male gestis autem nulla auctoritate contradicunt, dum plerumque laudant etiam, quod reprobare debuerant, seductus ab his, quae infra suppetunt, super se animus extollitur, et dum foris immenso favore circumdatur, intus veritate vacuatur, atque oblitus sui in voces se spargit alienas, talemque se credit, qualem se foris audit, non qualem intus discernere debuit. Subjectos despicit, eosque aequales sibi naturae ordine non agnoscit, et

* Gen. ix, 1 et 7.

quos sorte potestatis excesserit, transcendisse se etiam vitae meritis credit. Cunctis se aestimat amplius sapere, quibus se videt amplius posse. In quodam quippe se constituit culmine apud semetipsum, et qui aequa ceteris naturae conditione constringitur, ex aequo respicere ceteros dedignatur: sicque usque ad ejus similitudinem ducitur, de quo scriptum est: "Omne sublime videt, et ipse est rex super universos filios superbiae."* Qui singulare culmen appetens, et socialem angelorum vitam despiciens ait: "Ponam sedem meam ad Aquilonem, et ero similis Altissimo."† Miro ergo judicio intus foveam dejectionis invenit, dum foris se in culmine potestatis extollit. Apostatae quippe angelo similis efficitur, dum homo hominibus esse similis dedignatur. Sic Saul post humilitatis meritum in tumorem superbiae culmine potestatis excrevit: per humilitatem quippe praelatus est, per superbiam reprobatus Domino attestante, qui ait: "Nonne cum esses parvulus in oculis tuis, caput te constitui in tribubus Israel?"‡ Parvulum se in suis prius oculis viderat, sed fultus temporali potentia jam se parvulum non videbat. Ceterorum namque comparationi se praeferens, quia plus cunctis poterat, magnum se prae omnibus aestimabat. Miro autem modo cum apud se parvulus, apud Deum magnus; cum vero apud se magnus apparuit, apud Deum parvulus fuit. Plerumque ergo dum ex subjectorum affluentia animus inflatur, in fluxum superbiae ipso potentiae fastigio lenocinante corrumpitur. Quam videlicet potentiam bene regit, qui et tenere illam noverit et impugnare. Bene hanc regit qui scit per illam super culpas erigi, et scit cum illa ceteris aequalitate componi. Humana et-

* Job, xli. 25. † Isa. xiv. 13. ‡ 1 Reg. xv, 17.

enim mens plerumque extollitur, etiam cum nulla potestate fulcitur; quanto magis in altum se erigit, cum se ei etiam potestas adjungit? Quam tamen potestatem recte dispensat, qui sollicite noverit et sumere ex illa quod adjuvat, et expugnare quod tentat, et aequalem se cum illa ceteris cernere, et tamen se peccantibus zelo ultionis anteferre.

Sed hanc discretionem plenius agnoscimus, si pastoris primi exempla cernamus. Petrus namque auctore Deo sanctae Ecclesiae principatum tenens a bene agente Cornelio et sese ei humiliter prosternente immoderatius venerari recusavit, seque illi similem recognovit dicens: "Surge, et ego ipse homo sum."* Sed cum Ananiae et Saphirae culpam reperit, mox quanta potentia super ceteros excrevisset, ostendit.† Verbo namque eorum vitam percutit, quam spiritu perscrutante deprehendit, et summum se intra Ecclesiam contra peccata recoluit, quod honore sibi vehementer impenso coram bene agentibus fratribus non agnovit. Illic communionem aequalitatis meruit sanctitas actionis, hic zelus ultionis jus aperuit potestatis. Paulus bene agentibus fratribus praelatum se esse nesciebat, cum diceret: "Non quia dominamur fidei vestrae, sed adjutores sumus gaudii vestri." Atque illico adjunxit: "Fide enim statis."‡ Ac si id, quod protulerat, aperiret dicens: Ideo non dominamur fidei vestrae, quia fide statis; aequales enim vobis sumus, in quo vos stare cognoscimus. Quasi praelatum se fratribus esse nesciebat, cum diceret: "Facti sumus parvuli in medio vestrum."§ Et rursum: "Nos autem servos vestros per Christum."‖ Sed cum culpam, quae corrigi debuisset,

* Act. x, 26. † Act. v, 5. ‡ 2 Cor. i, 23.
§ 1 Thess. ii, 7. ‖ 2 Cor. iv, 5.

invenit, illico magistrum se esse recoluit, dicens: "Quid vultis? In virga veniam ad vos?" *

Summus itaque locus bene regitur, cum is, qui praeest, vitiis potius quam fratribus dominatur. Sed cum delinquentes subditos praepositi corrigunt, restat necesse est, ut sollicite attendant, quatenus per disciplinae debitum culpas quidem jure potestatis feriant, sed per humilitatis custodiam aequales se ipsis fratribus qui corriguntur agnoscant: quamvis plerumque etiam dignum est, ut eosdem, quos corrigimus, tacita nobis cogitatione praeferamus. Illorum namque per nos vitia disciplinae vigore feriuntur, in his vero, quae ipsi committimus, ne verbi quidem ab aliquo invectione laceramur. Tanto ergo apud Dominum obligatiores sumus, quanto apud homines inulte peccamus. Disciplina autem nostra subditos divino judicio tanto liberiores reddit, quanto hic eorum culpas sine vindicta non deserit. Servanda itaque est et in corde humilitas, et in opere disciplina. Atque inter haec solerter intuendum est, ne dum immoderatius custoditur virtus humilitatis, solvantur jura regiminis, et dum praelatus quisque plus se quam decet dejicit, subditorum vitam stringere sub disciplinae vinculo non possit. Teneant ergo rectores exterius, quod pro aliorum utilitate suscipiunt; servent interius, quod de sua aestimatione pertimescunt. Sed tamen quibusdam signis decenter erumpentibus eos apud se esse humiles etiam subjecti deprehendant: quatenus et in auctoritate eorum, quod formident, videant, et de humilitate, quod imitentur, agnoscant. Studeant igitur sine intermissione, qui praesunt, ut eorum potentia quanto magna exterius cernitur, tanto apud eos interius deprimatur, ne cogitationem vincat, ne

* 1 Cor. iv, 21

in delectationem sui animum rapiat, ne jam sub se mens eam regere non possit, cui se libidine dominandi supponit. Ne enim praesidentis animus ad elationem potestatis suae delectatione rapiatur, recte per quendam sapientem dicitur: "Ducem te constituerunt; noli extolli, sed esto in illis, quasi unus ex illis."* Hinc etiam Petrus ait: "Non dominantes in clero, sed forma facti gregis."† Hinc per semetipsam Veritas ad altiora nos virtutum merita provocans dicit: "Scitis, quia principes gentium dominantur eorum, et qui majores sunt, potestatem exercent in eos. Non ita erit inter vos, sed quicunque voluerit inter vos major fieri, sit vester minister, et qui voluerit inter vos primus esse, erit vester servus; sicut filius hominis non venit ministrari, sed ministrare."‡ Hinc est, quod servum ex suscepto regimine elatum quae post supplicia maneant, indicat dicens: "Quod si dixerit malus ille servus in corde suo: Moram facit dominus meus venire, et coeperit percutere conservos suos, manducet autem et bibat cum ebriis: veniet dominus servi illius in die qua non sperat, et hora qua ignorat, et dividet eam, partemque ejus ponet cum hypocritis."§ Inter hypocritas enim jure deputatur, qui ex simulatione disciplinae ministerium regiminis vertit in usum dominationis: et tamen nonnunquam gravius delinquitur, si inter perversos plus aequalitas, quam disciplina custoditur. Quia enim falsa pietate superatus ferire Heli delinquentes filios noluit, apud districtum judicem semetipsum cum filiis crudeli damnatione percussit.‖ Hinc namque divina ei voce dicitur: "Honorasti filios tuos magis quam me."¶ Hinc pastores increpat per

* Eccli xxxii, 1. † 1 Pet. v, 3. ‡ Matt. xx, 25 ss.
§ Matt. xxiv, 48 ss. ‖ 1 Reg. iv, 17 s. ¶ 1 Reg. ii, 29.

prophetam dicens: "Quod fractum est, non alligastis, et quod abjectum est, non reduxistis."* Abjectus enim non reducitur, cum quisque in culpa lapsus ad statum justitiae ex pastoralis sollicitudinis vigore non revocatur. Fracturam vero ligamen adstringit, cum culpam disciplina deprimit, ne plaga usque ad interitum defluat, si hanc districtionis severitas non coarctat.

Sed saepe deterius frangitur, cum fractura incaute colligatur, ita ut gravius scissuram sentiat, si hanc immoderatius ligamenta constringant. Unde necesse est, ut cum peccati vulnus in subditis corrigendo restringitur, magna se sollicitudine etiam districtio ipsa moderetur: quatenus sic jura disciplinae contra delinquentes exerceat, ut pietatis viscera non amittat. Curandum quippe est, ut rectorem subditis et matrem pietas et patrem exhibeat disciplina. Atque inter haec sollicita circumspectione providendum, ne aut districtio rigida, aut pietas sit remissa. Nam sicut in libris Moralibus† jam diximus, disciplina vel misericordia multum destituitur, si una sine altera teneatur. Sed erga subditos suos inesse rectoribus debet et juste consulens misericordia, et pie saeviens disciplina. Hinc namque est, quod docente Veritate,‡ per Samaritani studium semivivus in stabulum ducitur, et vinum atque oleum vulneribus ejus adhibetur, ut per vinum scilicet mordeantur vulnera, per oleum foveantur. Necesse quippe est, ut quisquis sanandis vulneribus praeest, in vino morsum doloris adhibeat, in oleo mollitiem pietatis, quatenus per vinum mundentur putrida, per oleum foveantur sananda. Miscenda ergo est lenitas cum severitate; faciendum quoddam ex utroque temperamentum, ut neque multa

* Ezec. xxxiv, 4. † l. xx, n. 14. ‡ Luc. x, 34.

asperitate exulcerentur subditi, neque nimia benignitate solvantur. Quod juxta Pauli vocem bene illa tabernaculi arca significat, in qua cum tabulis virga simul et manna est:* quia cum Scripturae sacrae scientia in boni rectoris pectore, si est virga districtionis, sit et manna dulcedinis. "Virga tua et baculus tuus, ipsa me consolata sunt."† Virga enim percutimur, baculo sustentamur. Si ergo est districtio virgae, quae feriat, sit et consolatio baculi, quae sustentet. Sit itaque amor, sed non emolliens: sit vigor, sed non exasperans: sit zelus, sed non immoderate saeviens: sit pietas, sed non plus quam expediat parcens, ut, dum se in arce regiminis justitia clementiaque permiscet, is, qui praeest, corda subditorum et terrendo demulceat, et tamen ad terroris reverentiam demulcendo constringat.

CAPUT VII

Ut sit rector internorum curam in exteriorum occupatione non minuens, exteriorum providentiam in internorum sollicitudine non relinquens

SIT rector internorum curam in exteriorum occupatione non minuens, exteriorum providentiam in internorum sollicitudine non relinquens, ne aut exterioribus deditus ab intimis corruat, aut solis interioribus occupatus, quae foris debet, proximis non impendat. Saepe namque nonnulli velut obliti, quod fratribus animarum causa praelati sunt, toto cordis adnisu secularibus curis inserviunt: has, cum adsunt, se agere exsultant; ad has, etiam cum desunt, diebus ac noctibus cogitationis turbidae aestibus anhelant. Cumque ab his cessante forsitan

* Heb. ix, 4. † Ps. xxii, 4.

opportunitate quieti sunt, ipsa deterius sua quiete fatigantur. Voluptatem namque censent, si actionibus deprimantur, laborem deputant, si in terrenis negotiis non laborant. Sicque fit, ut dum se urgeri mundanis tumultibus gaudent, interna, quae alios docere debuerant, ignorent. Unde subjectorum quoque procul dubio vita torpescit: quia cum proficere spiritaliter appetit, in exemplo ejus, qui sibi praelatus est, quasi in obstaculo itineris offendit. Languente enim capite membra incassum vigent, et in exploratione hostium frustra exercitus velociter sequitur, si ab ipso duce itineris erratur. Nulla subditorum mentes exhortatio sublevat, eorumque culpas increpatio nulla castigat: quia, dum per animarum praesulem terreni exercetur officium judicis, a gregis custodia vacat cura pastoris; et subjecti veritatis lumen apprehendere nequeunt, quia dum pastoris sensus terrena studia occupant, vento tentationis impulsus Ecclesiae oculos pulvis caecat. Quo contra recte humani generis Redemptor, cum nos a ventris voracitate compesceret dicens: "Attendite autem vobis, ut non graventur corda vestra in crapula et ebrietate"; illico adjunxit: "Aut in curis hujus vitae."* Ubi pavorem quoque protinus intente adjiciens: "Ne forte," inquit, "superveniat in vos repentina dies illa."† Cujus adventus etiam qualitatem denunciat dicens: "Tamquam laqueus enim veniet super omnes, qui sedent super faciem omnis terrae."‡ Hinc iterum dicit: "Nemo potest duobus dominis servire."§ Hinc Paulus religiosorum mentes a mundi consortio contestando, ac potius conveniendo suspendit dicens: "Nemo militans Deo implicat se negotiis secularibus, ut ei placeat, cui

* Luc. xxi, 34. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid., 35.
§ Luc. xvi, 13.

se probavit."* Hinc Ecclesiae rectoribus et vacandi studia praecipit, et consulendi remedia ostendit dicens: "Secularia igitur judicia si habueritis, contemptibiles, qui sunt in Ecclesia, illos constituite ad judicandum":† ut ipsi videlicet dispensationibus terrenis inserviant, quos dona spiritalia non exornant. Ac si apertius dicat: Quia penetrare intima nequeunt, saltem necessaria foris operentur. Hinc Moyses, qui cum Deo loquitur, Jethro alienigenae reprehensione judicatur, quod terrenis populorum negotiis stulto labore deserviat: cui et consilium mox praebetur, ut pro se alios ad jurgia dirimenda constituat, et ipse liberius ad erudiendos populos spiritalium arcana cognoscat.‡

A subditis ergo inferiora gerenda sunt, a rectoribus summa cogitanda, ut scilicet oculum, qui praevidendis gressibus praeeminet, cura pulveris non obscuret. Caput namque subjectorum sunt cuncti, qui praesunt; et ut recta pedes valeant itinera carpere, haec procul dubio caput debet ex alto providere, ne a provectus sui itinere pedes torpeant, cum curvata rectitudine corporis caput sese ad terram declinat. Qua autem mente animarum praesul honore pastorali inter ceteros utitur, si in terrenis negotiis, quae reprehendere in aliis debuit, et ipse versatur? Quod videlicet ex ira justae retributionis per prophetam Dominus minatur dicens; "Et erit sicut populus, sic sacerdos."§ Sacerdos quippe est ut populus, quando ea agit is, qui spiritali officio fungitur, quae illi nimirum faciunt, qui adhuc de studiis carnalibus judicantur. Quod cum magno scilicet dolore caritatis Jeremias propheta conspiciens quasi sub destructione templi deplorat dicens:

* 2 Tim. ii, 4. † 1 Cor. vi, 4. ‡ Exod. xviii, 17 s.
§ Osee iv, 9.

"Quomodo obscuratum est aurum, mutatus est color optimus, dispersi sunt lapides sanctuarii in capite omnium platearum!"* Quid namque auro, quod metallis ceteris praeeminet, nisi excellentia sanctitatis? Quid colore optimo, nisi cunctis amabilis reverentia religionis exprimitur? Quid sanctuarii lapidibus, nisi sacrorum ordinum personae signantur? Quid platearum nomine nisi praesentis vitae latitudo figuratur? Quia enim graeco eloquio πλάτος latitudo dicitur, profecto a latitudine plateae sunt vocatae. Per semetipsam vero Veritas dicit: "Lata et spatiosa via est, quae ducit ad perditionem."† Aurum igitur obscuratur, cum terrenis actibus sanctitatis vita polluitur. Color optimus commutatur, cum quorundam, qui degere religiose credebantur, aestimatio anteacta minuitur. Nam cum quilibet post sanctitatis habitum terrenis se actibus inserit, quasi colore permutato ante humanos oculos ejus reverentia despecta pallescit. Sanctuarii quoque lapides in plateas disperguntur, cum causarum secularium foras lata itinera expetunt hi, qui ad ornamentum Ecclesiae internis mysteriis quasi in secretis tabernaculi vacare debuerunt. Ad hoc quippe sanctuarii lapides fiebant, ut intra Sancta Sanctorum in vestimento summi sacerdotis apparerent. Cum vero ministri religionis a subditis honorem Redemptoris sui ex merito vitae non exigunt, sanctuarii lapides in ornamento pontificis non sunt. Qui nimirum sanctuarii lapides dispersi per plateas jacent, cum personae sacrorum ordinum voluptatum suarum latitudini deditae terrenis negotiis inhaerent. Et notandum, quod non hos dispersos in plateis, sed in capite platearum dicit: quia et cum terrena agunt, summi videri appetunt, ut et

* Thren. iv, 1. † Matt. vii, 18.

lata itinera teneant ex voluptate delectationis. et tamen in platearum sint capite ex honore sanctitatis.

Nil quoque obstat, si sanctuarii lapides eosdem ipsos, quibus constructum sanctuarium existebat, accipimus: qui dispersi in platearum capite jacent, quando sacrorum ordinum viri terrenis actibus ex desiderio inserviunt, ex quorum prius officio sanctitatis gloria stare videbatur. Secularia itaque negotia aliquando ex compassione toleranda sunt, nunquam vero ex amore requirenda, ne, cum mentem diligentis aggravant, hanc suo victam pondere ad ima de coelestibus mergant. At contra, nonnulli gregis quidem curam suscipiunt, sed sic sibimet vacare ad spiritalia appetunt, ut rebus exterioribus nullatenus occupentur. Qui cum curare corporalia funditus negligunt, subditorum necessitatibus minime concurrunt. Quorum nimirum praedicatio plerumque despicitur: quia, dum delinquentium facta corripiunt, sed tamen eis necessaria praesentis vitae non tribuunt, nequaquam libenter audiuntur. Egentis etenim mentem doctrinae sermo non penetrat, si hunc apud ejus animum manus misericordiae non commendat. Tunc autem verbi semen facile germinat, quando hoc in audientis pectore pietas praedicantis rigat. Unde rectorem necesse est, ut interiora possit infundere, cogitatione innoxia etiam exteriora providere. Sic itaque pastores erga interiora studia subditorum suorum ferveant, quatenus in eis exterioris quoque vitae providentiam non relinquant. Nam quasi jure, ut diximus, a percipienda praedicatione gregis animus frangitur, si cura exterioris subsidii a pastore negligatur. Unde et primus pastor sollicite admonet, dicens: "Seniores, qui in vobis

sunt, obsecro consenior et testis Christi passionum, qui et ejus, quae in futuro revelanda est, gloriae communicator, pascite, qui in vobis est, gregem Dei."* Qui hoc in loco pastionem cordis an corporis suaderet, aperuit, cum protinus adjunxit: "Providentes non coacte, sed spontanee secundum Deum, neque turpis lucri gratia, sed voluntarie." Quibus profecto verbis pastoribus pie praecavetur, ne, dum subjectorum inopiam satiant, se mucrone ambitionis occidant, ne, cum per eos carnis subsidiis reficiuntur proximi, ipsi remaneant a justitiae pane jejuni. Hanc pastorum sollicitudinem Paulus excitat, dicens: "Qui suorum, et maxime domesticorum curam non habet, fidem negavit, et est infideli deterior."† Inter haec itaque metuendum semper est, et vigilanter intuendum, ne, dum cura ab eis exterior agitur, ab interna intentione mergantur. Plerumque enim, ut praediximus, corda rectorum, dum temporali sollicitudini incaute deserviunt, ab intimo amore frigescunt; et foras fusa oblivisci non metuunt, quia animarum regimina susceperunt. Sollicitudo ergo, quae subditis exterius impenditur, sub certa necesse est mensura teneatur. Unde bene ad Ezechielem dicitur: "Sacerdotes caput suum non radent, neque comam nutrient, sed tondentes attondent capita sua."‡ Sacerdotes namque jure vocati sunt, qui, ut sacrum ducatum praebeant, fidelibus praesunt. Capilli vero in capite exteriores sunt cogitationes in mente: qui, dum super cerebrum insensibiliter oriuntur, curas vitae praesentis designant, quae ex sensu negligenti, quia importune aliquando prodeunt, quasi nobis non sentientibus procedunt. Quia igitur cuncti, qui praesunt, habere quidem sollicitudines exteriores

* 1 Pet. v, 1. † 1 Tim. v, 8 ‡ Ezec. xliv, 20.

debent, nec tamen eis vehementer incumbere, sacerdotes recte et caput prohibentur radere, et comam nutrire, et cogitationes carnis de vita subditorum, nec a se funditus amputent, nec rursum ad crescendum nimis relaxent. Ubi et bene dicitur: "Tondentes tondent capita sua,"* ut videlicet curae temporalis sollicitudinis et quantum necesse est, prodeant, et tamen recidantur citius, ne immoderatius excrescant. Dum igitur et per administratam exteriorem providentiam corporum vita protegitur, et rursus per moderatam cordis intentionem non impeditur, capilli in capite sacerdotis et servantur, ut cutem cooperiant, et resecantur ne oculos claudant.

CAPUT VIII

Ne placere rector suo studio hominibus appetat, sed tamen ad quod placere debeat, intendat

INTER haec quoque necesse est, ut rector solerter invigilet, ne hunc cupido placendi hominibus pulset: nec cum studiose interiora penetrat, cum provide exteriora subministrat, se magis a subditis diligi quam veritatem quaerat, ne cum bonis actibus fultus a mundo videtur alienus, hunc auctori reddat extraneum amor suus. Hostis namque Redemptoris est, qui per recta opera, quae facit, ejus vice ab Ecclesia amari concupiscit; quia adulterinae cogitationis reus est, si placere puer sponsae oculis appetit, per quem sponsus dona transmisit. Qui nimirum amor proprius, cum rectoris mentem ceperit, aliquando hanc inordinate ad mollitiem, aliquando vero ad asperitatem rapit. Ex amore etenim suo mens rectoris in mollitiem vertitur, quia cum

* Ezec. xliv, 20.

peccantes subditos respicit, ne erga hunc eorum dilectio torpeat, corripere non praesumit: nonnunquam vero errata subditorum, quae increpare debuerat, adulationibus demulcet. Unde bene per prophetam dicitur: "Vae his, qui consuunt pulvillos sub omni cubito manus, et faciunt cervicalia sub capite universae aetatis ad capiendas animas."* Pulvillos quippe sub omni cubito manus ponere, est cadentes a sua rectitudine animas, atque in hujus mundi se delectatione reclinantes blanda adulatione refovere. Quasi enim pulvillo cubitus, vel cervicalibus caput jacentis excipitur, cum correptionis duritia peccanti subtrahitur, eique mollities favoris adhibetur, ut in errore molliter jaceat, quem nulla asperitas contradictionis pulsat. Sed haec rectores, qui semetipsos diligunt, his procul dubio exhibent, a quibus se nocere posse in studio gloriae temporalis timent. Nam quos nil contra se valere conspiciunt, hos nimirum asperitate rigidae semper invectionis premunt, nunquam clementer admonent, sed pastoralis mansuetudinis obliti, jure dominationis terrent. Quos recte per prophetam divina vox increpat dicens: "Vos autem cum austeritate imperabatis eis et cum potentia."† Plus enim se suo auctore diligentes jactanter erga subditos se erigunt, nec quid agere debeant, sed quid valeant attendunt: nil de se subsequenti judicio metuunt, improbe de temporali potestate gloriantur: libet ut licenter et illicita faciant, et subditorum nemo contradicat. Qui ergo et prava studet agere, et tamen ad haec vult ceteros tacere, ipse sibimet testis est, quia plus veritate se appetit diligi, quam contra se non vult defendi. Nemo quippe est, qui ita vivat, ut aliquatenus non delinquat. Ille ergo

* Ezec. xiii, 18. † Ezec. xxxiv, 4.

se ipso amplius veritatem desiderat amari, qui sibi a nullo vult contra veritatem parci. Hinc etenim Petrus increpationem Pauli libenter accepit*: hinc David correptionem subditi humiliter audivit†: quia rectores boni, dum privato diligere amore se nesciunt, liberae puritatis verbum a subditis obsequium humilitatis credunt. Sed inter haec necesse est, ut cura regiminis tanta moderaminis arte temperetur, quatenus subditorum mens cum quaedam recte sentire potuerit, sic in vocis libertatem prodeat, ut tamen libertas in superbiam non erumpat, ne dum fortasse immoderatius linguae eis libertas conceditur, vitae ab his humilitas amittatur. Sciendum quoque est, quod oporteat ut rectores boni placere hominibus appetant, sed ut suae aestimationis dulcedine proximos in affectum veritatis trahant, non ut se amari desiderent, sed ut dilectionem suam quasi quandam viam faciant, per quam corda audientium ad amorem Conditoris introducant. Difficile quippe est, ut quamlibet recta denuncians praedicator, qui non diligitur, libenter audiatur. Debet ergo, qui praeest, et studere se diligi, quatenus possit audiri, et tamen amorem suum pro semetipso non quaerere, ne inveniatur ei, cui servire per officium cernitur, occulta cogitationis tyrannide resultare. Quod bene Paulus insinuat, cum sui nobis studii occulta manifestat, dicens: "Sicut et ego per omnia omnibus placeo."‡ Qui tamen rursus dicit: "Si adhuc hominibus placerem, Christi servus non essem."§ Placet ergo Paulus, et non placet: quia in eo, quod placere appetit, non se, sed per se hominibus placere veritatem quaerit.

* Gal. ii, 11. † 2 Reg. xii, 7. ‡ 1 Cor. x, 33. § Gal. i, 10.

CAPUT IX

Quod scire sollicite rector debet, quia plerumque vitia virtutes se esse mentiuntur

SCIRE etiam rector debet, quod plerumque vitia virtutes se esse mentiuntur. Nam saepe sub parsimoniae nomine se tenacia palliat, contraque se effusio sub appellatione largitatis occultat. Saepe inordinata remissio pietas creditur, et effrenata ira spiritalis zeli virtus aestimatur. Saepe praecipitata actio velocitatis efficacia, atque agendi tarditas gravitatis consilium putatur. Unde necesse est, ut rector animarum virtutes ac vitia vigilanti cura discernat, ne aut cor tenacia occupet, et parcum se videri in dispensationibus exsultet: aut cum effuse quid perditur, largum se quasi miserando glorietur: aut remittendo, quod ferire debuit, ad aeterna supplicia subditos pertrahat: aut immaniter feriendo quod delinquitur, ipse gravius delinquat: aut hoc, quod agi recte ac graviter potuit, immature praeveniens laeviget: aut bonae actionis meritum differendo ad deteriora permutet.

CAPUT X

Quae esse debet rectoris discretio correptionis et dissimulationis, ferboris et mansuetudinis

SCIENDUM quoque est, quod aliquando subjectorum vitia prudenter dissimulanda sunt, sed quia dissimulantur, indicanda: aliquando et aperte cognita mature toleranda, aliquando vero subtiliter et occulta perscrutanda: aliquando leni-

ter arguenda, aliquando autem vehementer increpanda. Nonnulla quippe, ut diximus, prudenter dissimulanda sunt, sed quia dissimulantur, indicanda: ut cum delinquens et deprehendi se cognoscit et perpeti, has, quas in se tacite tolerari considerat, augere culpas erubescat, seque se judice puniat, quem sibi apud se rectoris patientia clementer excusat. Qua scilicet dissimulatione bene Judaeam Dominus corripit, cum per prophetam dicit: "Mentita es, et mei non es recordata, neque cogitasti in corde tuo, quia ego tacens, et quasi non videns."* Et dissimulavit ergo culpas, et innotuit, quia et contra peccantem tacuit, et hoc ipsum tamen quia tacuerit dixit. Nonnulla autem vel aperte cognita mature toleranda sunt, cum videlicet rerum minime opportunitas congruit, ut aperte corrigantur. Nam secta immature vulnera deterius infervescunt, et nisi cum tempore medicamenta conveniant, constat procul dubio, quod medendi officium amittant. Sed cum tempus subditis ad correptionem quaeritur, sub ipso culparum pondere patientia praesulis exercetur. Unde bene per psalmistam dicitur: "Supra dorsum meum fabricaverunt peccatores."† In dorso quippe onera sustinemus. Supra dorsum igitur suum fabricasse peccatores queritur, ac si aperte dicat: Quos corrigere nequeo, quasi superimpositum onus porto.

Nonnulla autem occulta subtiliter sunt perscrutanda, ut quibusdam signis erumpentibus rector in subditorum mente omne, quod clausum latet, inveniat, et interveniente correptionis articulo ex minimis majora cognoscat. Unde recte ad Ezechielem dicitur: "Fili hominis, fode parietem."‡ Unde mox idem propheta subjungit: "Et cum fodissem parietem, apparuit ostium unum.

*Isa. lvii, 11. †Ps. cxxviii, 3. ‡Ezec. viii, 8.

Et dixit ad me: Ingredere, et vide abominationes pessimas, quas isti faciunt hic. Et ingressus vidi: et ecce omnis similitudo reptilium, et animalium abominatio, et universa idola domus Israel depicta erant in pariete." Per Ezechielem quippe praepositorum persona signatur, per parietem duritia subditorum. Et quid est parietem fodere, nisi acutis inquisitionibus duritiam cordis aperire? Quem cum fodisset, apparuit ostium: quia cum cordis duritia vel studiosis percunctationibus, vel maturis correptionibus scinditur, quasi quaedam janua ostenditur, ex qua omnia in eo, qui corripitur, cogitationum interiora videantur. Unde et bene illic sequitur: "Ingredere et vide abominationes pessimas, quas isti faciunt hic." Quasi ingreditur, ut abominationes aspiciat, qui discussis quibusdam signis exterius apparentibus ita corda subditorum penetrat, ut cuncta ei, quae illicite cogitantur, innotescant. Unde et subdidit: "Et ingressus vidi; et ecce omnis similitudo reptilium, et animalium abominatio." In reptilibus cogitationes omnino terrenae signantur, in animalibus vero jam quidem aliquantulum a terra suspensae, sed adhuc terrenae mercedis praemia requirentes. Nam reptilia toto ex corpore terrae inhaerent, animalia autem magna parte corporis a terra suspensa sunt, appetitu tamen gulae ad terram semper inclinantur. Reptilia itaque sunt intra parietem, quando cogitationes volvuntur in mente, quae a terrenis desideriis nunquam levantur. Animalia quoque sunt intra parietem, quando et si qua jam justa, si qua honesta cogitantur, appetendis tamen lucris temporalibus honoribusque deserviunt, et per semetipsa quidam jam quasi a terra suspensa sunt, sed adhuc per ambitum quasi per gulae deside-

*Col. iii, 5.

rium sese ad ima submittunt. Unde et bene subditur: "Et universa idola domus Israel depicta erant in pariete." Scriptum quippe est: "Et avaritia, quae est idolorum servitus."* Recte ergo post animalia idola describuntur, quia etsi honesta actione nonnulli jam quasi a terra se erigunt, ambitione tamen inhonesta semetipsos ad terram deponunt. Bene autem dicitur, "Depicta erant": quia, dum exteriorum rerum intrinsecus species attrahuntur, quasi in corde depingitur, quidquid fictis imaginibus deliberando cogitatur. Notandum itaque est, quia prius foramen in pariete, ac deinde ostium cernitur, et tunc demum occulta abominatio demonstratur: quia nimirum uniuscujusque peccati prius signa forinsecus, deinde janua apertae iniquitatis ostenditur, et tunc demum omne malum, quod intus latet, aperitur.

Nonnulla autem sunt leniter arguenda: nam cum non malitia, sed sola ignorantia vel infirmitate delinquitur, profecto necesse est, ut magno moderamine ipsa delicti correptio temperetur. Cuncti quippe, quousque in hac mortali carne subsistimus, corruptionis nostrae infirmitatibus subjacemus. Ex se ergo debet quisque colligere, qualiter alienae hunc oporteat imbecillitati misereri, ne contra infirmitatem proximi, si ad increpationis vocem ferventius rapitur, oblitus sui esse videatur. Unde bene Paulus admonet dicens: "Si praeoccupatus fuerit homo in aliquo delicto, vos, qui spirituales estis, instruite hujusmodi in spiritu mansuetudinis, considerans teipsum, ne et tu tenteris."* Ac si aperte dicat: Cum displicet ex aliena infirmitate quod conspicis, pensa quod es; ut in increpationis zelo se spiritus temperet, dum sibi quoque, quod increpat, timet.

* Gal. vi, 1.

Nonnulla autem sunt vehementer increpanda, ut cum culpa ab auctore non cognoscitur, quanti sit ponderis, ab increpantis ore sentiatur. Et cum sibi quis malum, quod perpetravit, laevigat, hoc contra se graviter ex corripientis asperitate pertimescat. Debitum quippe rectoris est supernae patriae gloriam per vocem praedicationis ostendere, quanta in hujus vitae itinere tentamenta antiqui hostis lateant, aperire, et subditorum mala, quae tolerari leniter non debent, cum magna zeli asperitate corrigere, ne, si minus contra culpas accenditur, culparum omnium reus ipse teneatur. Unde bene ad Ezechielem dicitur: "Sume tibi laterem, et pones eum coram te, et describes in eo civitatem Jerusalem." Statimque subjungitur: "Et ordinabis adversus eam obsidionem, et aedificabis munitiones, et comportabis aggerem, et dabis contra eam castra, et pones arietes in gyro."* Eique ad munitionem suam protinus subinfertur: "Et tu sume tibi sartaginem ferream, et pones eam murum ferreum inter te et inter civitatem." Cujus enim Ezechiel propheta nisi magistrorum speciem tenet? Cui dicitur: "Sume tibi laterem, et pones eum coram te, et describes in eo civitatem Jerusalem." Sancti quippe doctores sibi laterem sumunt, quando, terrenum auditorum cor ut doceant, apprehendunt. Quem scilicet laterem coram se ponunt, quia tota illud mentis intentione custodiunt. In quo et civitatem Jerusalem jubentur describere; quia praedicando terrenis cordibus curant summopere, quae sit supernae pacis visio, demonstrare. Sed quia incassum gloria patriae coelestis agnoscitur, nisi et quanta hic irruant hostis callidi tentamenta noscantur, apte subjungitur: "Et ordinabis adversus eum obsidionem,

* Ezec. iv, 1, 2.

et aedificabis munitiones." Sancti quippe praedicatores obsidionem circa laterem, in quo Jerusalem civitas descripta est, ordinant, quando terrenae menti, sed jam supernam patriam requirenti, quanta eum in hujus vitae tempore vitiorum impugnet adversitas, demonstrant. Nam cum unumquodque peccatum, quomodo proficientibus insidietur, ostenditur, quasi obsidio circa civitatem Jerusalem voce praedicatoris ordinatur. Sed quia non solum debent innotescere, qualiter vitia impugnent, verum etiam quomodo custoditae nos virtutes roborent, recte subjungitur: "Et aedificabis munitiones." Munitiones quippe sanctus praedicator aedificat, quando, quae virtutes quibus resistant vitiis, demonstrat. Et quia crescente virtute plerumque bella tentationis augentur, recte adhuc additur: "Et comportabis aggerem, et dabis contra eam castra, et pones arietes in gyro." Aggerem namque comportat, quando praedicator quisque molem crescentis tentationis enuntiat. Et contra Jerusalem castra erigit, quando rectae intentioni audientium hostis callidi circumspectas, et quasi incomprehensibiles insidias praedicit. Atque arietes in gyro ponit, cum tentationum aculeos in hac vita nos undique circumdantes et virtutum murum perforantes innotescit.

Sed cuncta haec licet subtiliter rector insinuet, nisi contra delicta singulorum aemulationis spiritu ferveat, nullam sibi in perpetuum absolutionem parat. Unde illic adhuc recte subjungitur: "Et tu sume tibi sartaginem ferream, et pones eam murum ferreum inter te et inter civitatem." Per sartaginem quippe frixura mentis, per ferrum vero increpationis fortitudo signatur. Quid vero acrius doctoris mentem, quam zelus Dei frigit et excruciat? Unde Paulus hu-

jus sartaginis urebatur frixura, cum diceret: "Quis infirmatur, et ego non infirmor? Quis scandalizatur, et ego non uror."* Et quia quisquis zelo Dei accenditur, ne damnari ex negligentia debeat, forti in perpetuum custodia munitur, recte dicitur: "Pones eam murum ferreum inter te et civitatem." Sartago enim ferrea murus ferreus inter prophetam et civitatem ponitur: quia, cum nunc fortem zelum rectores exhibent, eundem zelum postmodum inter se et auditores suos fortem munitionem tenent, ne tunc ad vindictam destituti sint, si nunc fuerint in correptione dissoluti.

Sed inter haec sciendum est, quia dum ad increpationem se mens doctoris exasperat, difficile valde est, ut non aliquando, et ad aliquid quod dicere non debet, erumpat. Et plerumque contingit, ut, dum culpa subditorum cum magna invectione corripitur, magistri lingua usque ad excessus verba pertrahatur. Cumque increpatio immoderate accenditur, corda delinquentium in desperatione deprimuntur. Unde necesse est, ut exasperatus rector, cum subditorum mentem plus quam debuit percussisse considerat, apud se semper ad poenitentiam recurrat, ut per lamenta veniam in conspectu Veritatis obtineat, ex eo etiam, quod per zeli ejus studium peccat. Quod figurate Dominus per Moysen praecipit dicens: "Si quis abierit cum amico suo simpliciter in silvam ad ligna caedenda, et lignum securis fugerit manu, ferrumque lapsum de manubrio amicum ejus percusserit et occiderit, hic ad unum supradictarum urbium fugiet, et vivet: ne forte proximus ejus, cujus effusus est sanguis, doloris stimulo persequatur et apprehendat eum, et percutiat animam ejus."† Ad silvam quippe cum

* 2 Cor. xi, 29. † Deut. xix. 4, 5.

amico imus, quoties ad intuenda subditorum delicta convertimur. Et simpliciter ligna succidimus, cum delinquentium vitia pia intentione resecamus. Sed securis manu fugit, cum sese increpatio plus quam necesse est in asperitatem pertrahit. Ferrumque de manubrio prosilit, cum de correptione sermo durior excedit. Et amicum percutit et occidit, quia auditorem suum prolata contumelia a spiritu dilectionis interficit. Correpti namque mens repente ad odium proruit, si hanc immoderata increpatio plus quam debuit affligit. Sed is, qui incaute ligna percutit et proximum extinguit, ad tres necesse est urbes fugiat, ut in una earum defensus vivat: quia, si ad poenitentiae lamenta conversus in unitate sacramenti sub spe et caritate absconditur, reus perpetrati homicidii non tenetur. Eumque extincti proximus, et cum invenerit, non occidit; quia, cum districtus judex venerit, qui sese nobis per naturae nostrae consortium junxit, ab eo procul dubio culpae reatum non expetit, quem sub ejus venia fides, spes et caritas abscondit.

CAPUT XI

Quantum rector sacrae legis meditationibus esse debeat intentus

SED omne hoc rite a rectore agitur, si supernae formidinis et dilectionis spiritu afflatus studiose quotidie sacri eloquii praecepta meditetur, ut in eo vim sollicitudinis, et erga coelestem vitam providae circumspectionis, quam humanae conversationis usus indesinenter destruit, divinae admonitionis verba restaurent, et qui ad vetustatem vitae per societatem secularium ducitur, ad amorem semper spiritalis patriae compunctio-

nis adspiratione renovetur. Valde namque inter humana verba cor defluit: cumque indubitanter constet, quod externis occupationum tumultibus impulsum a semetipso corruat, studere incessabiliter debet, ut per eruditionis studium resurgat. Hinc est enim, quod praelatum gregi discipulum Paulus admonet dicens: "Dum venio, attende lectioni."* Hinc David ait: "Quomodo dilexi legem tuam Domine, tota die meditatio mea est."† Hinc Moysi Dominus de portanda arca praecipit dicens: "Facies quatuor circulos aureos, quos pones per quatuor arcae angulos, faciesque vectes de lignis sethim, et operies auro, inducesque per circulos, qui sunt in arcae lateribus, ut portetur in eis, qui semper erunt in circulis, nec unquam extrahentur ab eis."‡ Quid per arcam, nisi sancta Ecclesia figuratur? Cui quatuor circuli aurei per quatuor angulos jubentur adjungi; quia in eo, quod per quatuor mundi partes dilatata tenditur, procul dubio quatuor sancti Evangelii libris accincta praedicatur. Vectesque de lignis sethim fiunt, qui eisdem ad portandum circulis inseruntur: quia fortes perseverantesque doctores velut imputribilia ligna quaerendi sunt, qui instructioni sacrorum voluminum semper inhaerentes sanctae Ecclesiae unitatem denuntient, et quasi intromissi circulis arcam portent. Vectibus quippe arcam portare, est bonis doctoribus sanctam Ecclesiam ad rudes infidelium mentes praedicando deducere. Qui auro quoque jubentur operiri, ut dum sermone aliis insonant, ipsi etiam vitae splendore fulgescant. De quibus apte subditur: "Qui semper erunt in circulis, nec unquam extrahentur ab eis." Quia nimirum necesse est, ut qui ad officium praedicationis excubant, a sacrae lectionis studio non rece-

* 1 Tim. iv, 13. † Ps. cxviii, 97. ‡ Exod. xxv, 12.

dant. Ad hoc namque vectes esse in circulis semper jubentur, ut, cum portari arcam opportunitas exigit, de intromittendis vectibus portandi tarditas nulla generetur: quia videlicet, cum spiritale aliquid a subditis pastor inquiritur, ignominiosum valde est, si tunc quaerat dicere, cum quaestionem debet enodare. Sed circulis vectes inhaereant, ut doctores semper in suis cordibus eloquia sacra meditantes testamenti arcam sine mora elevent, si quidquid necesse est, protinus docent. Unde bene primus pastor Ecclesiae pastores ceteros admonet dicens: "Parati semper ad satisfactionem omni poscenti vos rationem de ea, quae in vobis est, spe."* Ac si aperte dicat: Ut ad portandum arcam nulla mora praepediat, vectes a circulis nunquam recedant.

* 1 Pet. iii, 15.

Pars Tertia

Qualiter rector bene vivens debeat docere et admonere subditos

PROLOGUS

QUIA igitur, qualis esse debeat pastor, ostendimus, nunc qualiter doceat, demonstremus. Ut enim longe ante nos reverendae memoriae Gregorius Nazianzenus edocuit, non una eademque cunctis exhortatio congruit, quia nec cunctos par morum qualitas adstringit. Saepe namqué aliis officiunt, quae aliis prosunt, quia et plerumque herbae, quae haec animalia nutriunt, alia occidunt, et lenis sibilus equos mitigat, catulos instigat. Et medicamentum, quod hunc morbum imminuit, alteri vires jungit, et panis, qui vitam fortium roborat, parvulorum necat. Pro qualitate igitur audientium formari debet sermo doctorum, ut et ad sua singulis congruat, et tamen a communis aedificationis arte nunquam recedat. Quid enim sunt intentae mentes auditorum, nisi, ut ita dixerim, quaedam in cithara tensiones stratae chordarum, quas tangendi artifex, ut non sibimetipsi dissimile canticum faciat, dissimiliter pulsat? Et idcirco chordae consonam modulationem reddunt: quia uno quidem plectro, sed non uno impulsu feriuntur. Unde et doctor quisque, ut in una cunctos virtute caritatis aedificet, ex una doctrina non una eademque exhortatione tangere corda audientium debet.

CAPUT I

Quanta debet esse diversitas in arte praedicationis

ALITER namque admonendi sunt viri, atque aliter feminae. Aliter juvenes, aliter senes. Aliter inopes, aliter locupletes. Aliter laeti, aliter tristes. Aliter subditi, aliter praelati. Aliter servi, aliter domini. Aliter hujus mundi sapientes, aliter hebetes. Aliter impudentes, aliter verecundi. Aliter protervi, aliter pusillanimes. Aliter impatientes, aliter patientes. Aliter benevoli, aliter invidi. Aliter simplices, aliter impuri. Aliter incolumes, aliter aegri. Aliter qui flagella metuunt, et propterea innocenter vivunt; aliter qui sic in iniquitate duruerunt, ut neque per flagella corrigantur. Aliter nimis taciti, aliter multiloquio vacantes. Aliter pigri, aliter praecipites. Aliter mansueti, aliter iracundi. Aliter humiles, aliter elati. Aliter pertinaces, aliter inconstantes. Aliter gulae dediti, aliter abstinentes. Aliter qui sua misericorditer tribuunt, aliter qui aliena rapere contendunt. Aliter qui nec aliena rapiunt, nec sua largiuntur; aliter qui et ea, quae habent, tribuunt, et tamen aliena rapere non desistunt. Aliter discordes, aliter pacati. Aliter seminantes jurgia, aliter pacifici. Aliter qui sacrae legis verba non intelligunt recte; aliter qui recte quidem intelligunt, sed haec humiliter non loquuntur. Aliter qui, cum digne praedicare valeant, prae nimia humilitate formidant; aliter quos a praedicatione imperfectio vel aetas prohibet, et tamen praecipitatio impellit. Aliter qui in hoc, quod temporaliter appetunt, prosperantur; aliter qui ea quidem, quae mundi sunt, concupiscunt, sed tamen adversitatis

labore fatigantur. Aliter conjugiis obligati, aliter a conjugii nexibus liberi. Aliter admixtionem carnis experti, aliter ignorantes. Aliter qui peccata deplorant operum, aliter qui cogitationum. Aliter qui commissa plangunt, nec tamen deserunt; aliter qui deserunt, nec tamen plangunt. Aliter qui illicita, quae faciunt, etiam laudant; aliter qui accusant prava, nec tamen devitant. Aliter qui repentina concupiscentia superantur, atque aliter qui in culpa ex consilio ligantur.

Aliter qui licet minima, crebro tamen illicita faciunt; aliter qui se a parvis custodiunt, sed aliquando in gravioribus demerguntur. Aliter qui bona nec inchoant, aliter qui inchoata minime consummant. Aliter qui mala occulte agunt, et bona publice, aliter qui bona, quae faciunt, abscondunt, et tamen quibusdam factis publice mala de se opinari permittunt. Sed quid utilitatis est, quod cuncta haec collecta numeratione transcurrimus, si non etiam admonitionis modos per singula, quanta possumus brevitate, pandamus? Aliter igitur admonendi sunt viri, atque aliter feminae; quia illis graviora, istis vero injungenda sunt leviora; ut illos magna exerceant, istas autem levia demulcendo convertant. Aliter admonendi sunt juvenes, atque aliter senes; quia illos plerumque severitas admonitionis ad profectum dirigit; istos vero ad meliora opera deprecatio blanda componit. Scriptum quippe est: "Seniorem ne increpaveris, sed obsecra ut patrem."*

* 1 Tim. v, 1.

CAPUT II

Quomodo admonendi sint inopes et divites

ALITER admonendi sunt inopes, atque aliter locupletes; illis namque offerre consolationis solatium contra tribulationem, istis vero inferre metum contra elationem debemus. Inopi quippe a Domino per prophetam dicitur: "Noli timere, quia non confunderis." * Cui non longe post blandiens dicit: "Paupercula tempestate convulsa." † Rursumque hanc consolatur dicens: "Elegi te in camino paupertatis." ‡ At contra Paulus discipulo de divitibus dicit: "Divitibus hujus seculi praecipe non superbe sapere, neque sperare in incerto divitiarum suarum." § Ubi notandum valde est, quod humilitatis doctor memoriam divitum faciens non ait: Roga, sed: "Praecipe": quia etsi impendenda est pietas infirmitati, honor tamen non debetur elationi. Talibus ergo rectum, quod dicitur, tanto rectius jubetur, quanto et in rebus transitoriis altitudine cogitationis intumescunt. De his in Evangelio Dominus dicit: "Vae vobis divitibus, qui habetis consolationem vestram." ‖ Quia enim, quae sunt aeterna, gaudia nesciunt, ex praesentis vitae abundantia consolantur. Offerenda est ergo eis consolatio, quos caminus paupertatis excoquit; atque illis inferendus est timor, quos consolatio gloriae temporalis extollit; ut et illi discant, quia divitias, quas non conspiciunt, possident, et isti cognoscant, quia eas, quas conspiciunt, nequaquam tenere possunt. Plerumque tamen

* Isa. liv, 4. † Ibid. 11. ‡ Isa. xlviii, 10.
§ 1 Tim. vi, 17. ‖ Luc. vi, 24.

personarum ordinem permutat qualitas morum, ut sit dives humilis, sit pauper elatus. Unde mox praedicantis lingua cum audientis debet vita componi; ut tanto districtius in paupere elationem feriat, quanto eam nec illata paupertas inclinat, et tanto lenius humilitatem divitum mulceat, quanto eos nec abundantia, quae sublevat, exaltat.

Nonnunquam tamen etiam superbus dives exhortationis blandimento placandus est, quia et plerumque dura vulnera per lenia fomenta mollescunt, et furor insanorum saepe ad salutem medico blandiente reducitur; cumque eis in dulcedine condescenditur, languor insaniae mitigatur. Neque enim negligenter intuendum est, quod cum Saulem spiritus adversus invaderet, apprehensa David cithara ejus vesaniam sedabat.* Quid enim per Saulem, nisi elatio potentum, et quid per David innuitur, nisi humilis vita sanctorum? Cum ergo Saul ab immundo spiritu arripitur, David canente ejus vesania temperatur: quia cum sensus potentum per elationem in furorem vertitur, dignum est, ut ad salutem mentis quasi dulcedine citharae locutionis nostrae tranquillitate revocetur. Aliquando autem cum hujus seculi potentes arguuntur, prius per quasdam similitudines velut de alieno negotio requirendi sunt, et cum rectam sententiam quasi in alterum protulerint, tunc modis congruentibus de proprio reatu feriendi sunt, ut mens temporali potentia tumida contra corripientem nequaquam se erigat, quae suo sibi judicio superbiae cervicem calcat; et in nulla sui defensione se exerceat, quam sententia proprii oris ligat. Hinc est enim, quod Nathan propheta arguere regem venerat, et quasi de causa

* 1 Reg. xviii, 10.

pauperis contra divitem judicium quaerebat; ut prius rex sententiam diceret, et reatum suum postmodum audiret, quatenus nequaquam justitiae contradiceret, quam ipse in se protulisset.* Vir itaque sanctus et peccatorem considerans et regem miro ordine audacem reum prius per confessionem ligare studuit, et postmodum per invectionem secare. Celavit paululum, quem quaesivit, sed percussit repente, quem tenuit. Pigrius enim fortasse incideret, si ab ipso sermonis exordio aperte culpam ferire voluisset, sed praemissa similitudine eam, quam occultabat, exacuit increpationem. Ad aegrum medicus venerat, secandum vulnus videbat, sed de patientia aegri dubitabat. Abscondit igitur ferrum medicinale sub veste, quod eductum subito fixit in vulnere, ut secantem gladium sentiret aeger, antequam cerneret, ne, si ante cerneret, sentire recusaret.

CAPUT III

Quomodo admonendi laeti et tristes

ALITER admonendi sunt laeti, atque aliter tristes. Laetis videlicet inferenda sunt tristia quae sequuntur ex supplicio; tristibus vero inferenda sunt laeta, quae promittuntur ex regno. Discant laeti ex minarum asperitate, quod timeant; audiant tristes praemiorum gaudia, de quibus praesumant. Illis quippe dicitur: "Vae vobis, qui ridetis nunc, quoniam flebitis": † isti vero eodem magistro docente audiunt: "Iterum videbo vos, et gaudebit cor vestrum, et gaudium vestrum nemo tollet a vobis." ‡ Nonnulli autem laeti vel tristes non rebus fiunt, sed conspersio-

* 2 Reg. xii, 4. s. † Luc. vi, 25. ‡ Joan. xvi, 22.

nibus* exsistunt. Quibus profecto intimandum est, quod quaedam vitia quibusdam conspersionibus juxta sunt. Habent enim laeti ex propinquo luxuriam, tristes iram. Unde necesse est, ut non solum quisque consideret, quod ex conspersione sustinet, sed etiam quod ex vicino deterius perurget; ne, dum nequaquam pugnat contra hoc, quod tolerat, ei quoque, a quo se liberum aestimat, vitio succumbat.

CAPUT IV

Quomodo admonendi subditi et praelati

ALITER admonendi sunt subditi, atque aliter praelati. Illos ne subjectio conterat, istos ne locus superior extollat. Illi ne minus, quae jubentur, impleant, isti ne plus justo jubeant, quae compleantur. Illi ut humiliter subjaceant, isti ut temperanter praesint. Nam quod intelligi et figuraliter potest, illis dicitur: "Filii, obedite parentibus vestris in Domino": istis vero praecipitur: "Et patres nolite ad iracundiam provocare filios vestros." † Illi discant, quomodo ante occulti arbitri oculos sua interiora componant, isti quomodo etiam commissis sibi exempla bene vivendi exterius praebeant.

Scire etenim praelati debent, quia si perversa unquam perpetrant, tot mortibus digni sunt, quot ad subditos suos perditionis exempla transmittunt. Unde necesse est, ut tanto se cautius a culpa custodiant, quanto per prava, quae faciunt, non soli moriuntur, sed aliarum animarum, quas pravis exemplis destruxerunt, rei sunt. Unde

* Per *conspersionem* Gregorius intelligit hic et alibi indolem, naturam, corporis et animae temperationem.

† Col. iii, 20.

admonendi sunt illi, ne districtius puniantur, si absoluti reperiri nequiverint saltem de se: isti, ne de subditorum errantibus judicentur, etiamsi se jam de se securos inveniunt. Illi, ut tanto circa se sollicitius vivant, quanto eos aliena cura non implicat: isti vero, ut sic aliorum curas expleant, quatenus et suas agere non desistant, et sic in propria sollicitudine ferveant, ut a commissorum custodia minime torpescant. Illi enim sibimet vacanti dicitur: "Vade ad formicam, o piger, et considera vias ejus, et disce sapientiam." * Iste autem terribiliter admonetur, cum dicitur: "Fili mi, si spoponderis pro amico tuo, defixisti apud extraneum manum tuam, et illaqueatus es verbis oris tui, et captus propriis sermonibus." † Spondere namque pro amico, est alienam animam in periculo suae conversationis accipere. Unde et apud extraneum manus defigitur, quia apud curam sollicitudinis, quae ante deerat, mens ligatur. Verbis vero oris sui illaqueatus est, ac propriis sermonibus captus, quia, dum commissis sibi cogitur bona dicere, ipsum prius necesse est, quae dixerit, custodire. Illaqueatur igitur verbis oris sui, dum ratione exigente constringitur, ne ejus vita ad aliud, quam admonet, relaxetur. Unde apud districtum judicem cogitur tanta in opere exsolvere, quanta eum constat aliis voce praecepisse. Ubi et bene mox exhortatio subditur, ut dicatur: "Fac ergo, quod dico, fili mi, et temetipsum libera, quia incidisti in manus proximi tui: discurre, festina, suscita amicum tuum; ne dederis somnum oculis tuis, ne dormitent palpebrae tuae." ‡ Quisquis enim ad vivendum aliis in exemplo praeponitur, non solum ut ipse vigilet, sed etiam ut amicum suscitet, admonetur. Ei namque vigilare bene

* Prov. vi, 6. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid. 3.

vivendo non sufficit, si non et illum, cui praeest, a peccati torpore disjungit. Bene autem dicitur: "Ne dederis somnum oculis tuis, ne dormitent palpebrae tuae." Somnum quippe oculis dare, est intentione cessante subditorum curam omnino negligere. Palpebrae vero dormitant, cum cogitationes nostrae ea, quae in subditis arguenda cognoscunt, pigredine deprimente dissimulant. Plene enim dormire est commissorum acta nec scire, nec corrigere. Non autem dormire, sed dormitare est, quae quidem reprehendenda sunt cognoscere, sed tamen propter mentis taedium dignis ea increpationibus non emendare. Dormitando vero oculus ad plenissimum somnum ducitur, quia dum plerumque, qui praeest, malum, quod cognoscit, non resecat, ad hoc quandoque negligentiae suae merito pervenit, ut quod a subjectis delinquitur, nec agnoscat.

Admonendi sunt itaque, qui praesunt, ut per circumspectionis studium oculos pervigiles intus et in circuitu habeant, et coeli animalia fieri contendant. Ostensa quippe coeli animalia in circuitu et intus oculis plena describuntur. Dignum quippe est,ut cuncti, qui praesunt, intus atque in circuitu oculos habeant, quatenus et interno judici in semetipsis placere studeant, et exempla vitae exterius praebentes ea etiam, quae in aliis sunt, corrigenda deprehendant.

Admonendi sunt subditi, ne praepositorum suorum vitam temere judicent, si quid eos fortasse agere reprehensibiliter vident, ne unde mala recte redarguunt, inde per elationis impulsum in profundiora mergantur. Admonendi sunt, ne cum culpas praepositorum considerant, contra eos audaciores fiant, sed sic, si qua valde sunt eorum prava, apud semetipsos dijudicent, ut tamen divino timore constricti ferre sub eis

jugum reverentiae non recusent. Quod melius ostendimus, si David factum ad medium deducamus. Saul quippe persecutor, cum ad purgandum ventrem speluncam fuisset ingressus, illic cum viris suis David inerat, qui jam tam longo tempore persecutionis ejus mala tolerabat. Cumque eum viri sui ad feriendum Saul accenderent, fregit eos responsionibus, quia manum mittere in christum Domini non deberet. Qui tamen occulte surrexit, et oram chlamydis ejus abscidit.* Quid enim per Saul, nisi mali rectores: quid per David, nisi boni subditi designantur? Saul igitur ventrem purgare, est pravos praepositos conceptam in corde malitiam usque ad opera miseri odoris extendere, et cogitata apud se noxia factis exterioribus exsequendo monstrare. Quem tamen David ferire metuit, quia piae subditorum mentes, ab omni se peste obtrectationis abstinentes, praepositorum vitam nullo linguae gladio percutiunt, etiam cum de imperfectione reprehendunt. Qui etsi quando pro infirmitate sese abstinere vix possunt, ut extrema quaedam atque exteriora praepositorum mala, sed tamen humiliter loquantur, quasi oram chlamydis silenter incidunt: quia videlicet, dum praelatae dignitati saltem innoxie et latenter derogant, quasi regis superpositi vestem foedant; sed tamen ad semetipsos redeunt, seque vehementissime vel de tenuissima verbi laceratione reprehendunt. Unde bene et illic scriptum est: "Post haec David percussit cor suum, eo quod abscidisset oram clamydis Saul."† Facta quippe praepositorum oris gladio ferienda non sunt, etiam cum recte reprehendenda judicantur. Si quando vero contra eos vel in minimis lingua labitur, necesse est, ut per afflictionem poeni-

*1 Reg. xxiv, 4. †Ibid. 6.

tentiae cor prematur: quatenus ad semetipsum redeat, et cum praepositae potestati deliquerit, ejus contra se judicium, a quo sibi praelata est, perhorrescat. Nam cum praepositis delinquimus, ejus ordinationi, qui eos nobis praetulit, obviamus. Unde Moyses quoque, cum contra se et Aaron conqueri populum cognovisset, ait: "Nos enim quid sumus? Nec contra nos est murmur vestrum, sed contra Dominum."*

CAPUT V

Quomodo admonendi servi et domini

ALITER admonendi sunt servi, atque aliter domini. Servi scilicet, ut in se semper humilitatem conditionis aspiciant: domini vero, ut naturae suae, qua aequaliter sunt cum servis conditi, memoriam non amittant. Servi admonendi sunt, ne dominos despiciant, ne Deum offendant, si ordinationi illius superbiendo contràdicunt: domini quoque admonendi sunt, quia contra Deum de munere ejus superbiunt, si eos, quos per conditionem tenent subditos, aequales sibi per naturae consortium non agnoscunt. Isti admonendi sunt, ut sciant se servos esse dominorum: illi admonendi sunt, ut cognoscant se conservos esse servorum. Istis namque dicitur: "Servi, obedite dominis carnalibus."† Et rursum: "Quicumque sunt sub jugo servi, dominos suos omni honore dignos arbitrentur";‡ illis autem dicitur: "Et vos domini eadem facite illis, remittentes minas, scientes quod et illorum et vester Dominus est in coelis."§

* Exod. xvi, 8. †Col. iii, 22. ‡1 Tim. vi, 1. § Eph. vi, 9.

CAPUT VI

Quomodo admonendi sapientes et hebetes

ALITER admonendi sunt sapientes hujus seculi, atque aliter hebetes. Sapientes quippe admonendi sunt, ut amittant scire, quae sciunt; hebetes quoque admonendi sunt, ut appetant scire, quae nesciunt. In illis hoc primum destruendum est, quod se sapientes arbitrantur: in istis jam aedificandum est, quidquid de superna sapientia cognoscitur; quia dum minime superbiunt, quasi ad suscipiendum aedificium corda paraverunt. Cum illis laborandum est, ut sapientius stulti fiant, stultam sapientiam deserant, et sapientiam Dei stultitiam discant; istis vero praedicandum est, ut ab ea, quae putatur stultitia, ad veram sapientiam vicinius transeant. Illis namque dicitur: "Si quis videtur inter vos sapiens esse in hoc seculo, stultus fiat, ut sit sapiens";* istis vero dicitur: "Non multi sapientes secundum carnem."† Et rursum: "Quae stulta sunt mundi, elegit Deus, ut confundat sapientes."‡ Illos plerumque ratiocinationis argumenta, istos nonnunquam melius exempla convertunt. Illis nimirum prodest, ut in suis allegationibus victi jaceant: istis vero aliquando sufficit, ut laudabilia aliorum facta cognoscant. Unde et magister egregius, sapientibus et insipientibus debitor, cum Hebraeorum quosdam sapientes, quosdam vero etiam tardiores admoneret, illis de completione testamenti veteris loquens eorum sapientiam argumento superavit dicens: "Quod enim antiquatur et senescit, prope

* 1 Cor. iii, 18. † 1 Cor. i, 26. ‡ 1 Cor. v, 27.

interitum est."* Cum vero solis exemplis quosdam trahendos cerneret, in eadem epistola adjunxit: "Sancti ludibria et verbera experti, insuper et vincula et carceres, lapidati sunt, secti sunt, tentati sunt, in occisione gladii mortui sunt."† Et rursum: "Mementote praepositorum vestrorum, qui vobis locuti sunt verbum Dei, quorum intuentes exitum conversationis, imitamini fidem";‡ quatenus et illos victrix ratio frangeret, et istos ad majora conscendere imitatio blanda suaderet.

CAPUT VII

Quomodo admonendi impudentes et verecundi

ALITER admonendi sunt impudentes, atque aliter verecundi. Illos namque ab impudentiae vitio non nisi increpatio dura compescit; istos autem plerumque ad melius exhortatio modesta componit. Illi se delinquere nesciunt, nisi etiam a pluribus increpentur: istis plerumque ad conversionem sufficit, quod eis doctor mala sua saltem leniter ad memoriam reducit. Illos melius corrigit, qui invehendo reprehendit: istis autem major profectus adducitur, si hoc, quod in eis reprehenditur, quasi ex latere tangatur. Impudentem quippe Judaeorum plebem Dominus aperte increpans ait: "Frons mulieris meretricis facta est tibi, noluisti erubescere."§ Et rursum verecundantem refovit dicens: "Confusionis adolescentiae tuae oblivisceris, et opprobrii viduitatis tua non recordaberis, quia dominabitur tui, qui fecit te."‖ Impudenter quoque delinquentes Galatas aperte Paulus in-

* Heb. viii, 13. † Heb. xi, 36, 37. ‡ Heb. xiii, 7.
§ Jer. iii, 3. ‖ Isa. liv, 4.

crepat dicens: "O insensati Galatae, quis vos fascinavit?"* Et rursum: "Sic stulti estis ut, cum spiritu coeperitis, nunc carne consummemini?"† Culpas vero verecundantium quasi compatiens reprehendit dicens: "Gavisus sum in Domino vehementer, quoniam tandem aliquando refloruistis pro me sentire sicut et sentiebatis: occupati enim eratis,"‡ ut et illorum culpas increpatio dura detegeret, et horum negligentiam mollior sermo velaret.

CAPUT VIII

Quomodo admonendi proterbi et pusillanimes

ALITER admonendi sunt protervi, atque aliter pusillanimes. Illi enim, dum valde de se praesumunt, exprobrando ceteros dedignantur: isti autem dum nimis infirmitatis suae sunt conscii, plerumque in desperationem cadunt. Illi singulariter summa aestimant cuncta, quae agunt; isti vehementer despecta putant esse, quae faciunt, et idcirco in desperatione franguntur. Subtiliter itaque ab arguente discutienda sunt opera protervorum, ut in quo sibi placent, ostendantur, quia Deo displicent.

Tunc enim protervos melius corrigimus, cum ea, quae bene egisse se credunt, male acta monstramus: ut unde adepta gloria creditur, inde utilis subsequatur confusio. Nonnunquam vero cum se vitium proterviae minime perpetrare cognoscunt, compendiosius ad correctionem veniunt, si alterius culpae manifestioris ex latere requisitae improperio confunduntur: ut ex eo, quod defendere nequeunt, cognoscant se tenere improbe, quod defendunt. Unde cum proterve Paulus

* Gal. iii, 1. † Gal. v. 3. ‡ Phil. iv, 10.

Corinthios adversum se invicem videret inflatos, ut alius Pauli, alius Apollo, alius Cephae, alius Christi esse se diceret,* incestus culpam in medium deduxit, quae apud eos et perpetrata fuerat, et incorrecta remanebat, dicens: "Auditur inter vos fornicatio, et talis fornicatio, qualis nec inter gentes, ita ut uxorem patris quis habeat. Et vos inflati estis, et non magis luctum habuistis, ut tolleretur de medio vestrum, qui hoc opus fecit."† Ac si aperte dicat: Quid vos per proterviam hujus vel illius dicitis, qui per dissolutionem negligentiae nullius vos esse monstratis?

At contra, pusillanimes aptius ad iter bene agendi reducimus, si quaedam illorum bona ex latere requiramus, ut dum in eis alia reprehendendo corripimus, alia amplectendo laudemus: quatenus eorum teneritudinem laus audita nutriat, quam culpa increpata castigat. Plerumque autem utilius apud illos proficimus, si et eorum bene gesta memoramus. Et si qua ab eis inordinate gesta sunt, non jam tamquam perpetrata corripimus, sed quasi adhuc, ne perpetrari debeant, prohibemus, ut et illa quae approbamus, illatos favor augeat, et contra ea, quae reprehendimus, magis apud pusillanimes exhortatio verecunda convalescat. Unde idem Paulum cum Thessalonicenses in accepta praedicatione perdurantes, quasi de vicino mundi termino quadam cognosceret pusillanimitate turbatos, prius in eis, quae fortia prospicit, laudat, et caute monendo postmodum, quae infirma sunt, roborat. Ait enim: "Gratias agere debemus Deo semper pro vobis, fratres, ita ut dignum est, quoniam supercrescit fides vestra, et abundat caritas uniuscujusque vestrum in invicem: ita ut et nos ipsi

* 1 Cor. i, 12; iii, 4. † 1 Cor. v, 1.

in vobis gloriemur in ecclesiis Dei, pro patientia vestra et fide.*

Qui cum blanda haec vitae eorum praeconia praemisisset, paulo post subdidit dicens: "Rogamus autem vos, fratres, per adventum Domini nostri JESU Christi, et nostrae congregationis in ipsum, ut non cito moveamini a vestro sensu, neque terreamini, neque per spiritum, neque per sermonem, neque per epistolam tamquam per nos missam, quasi instet dies Domini."† Egit enim verus doctor, ut prius audirent laudati, quod recognoscerent, et postmodum, quod exhortati sequerentur: quatenus eorum mentem, ne admonitio subjuncta concuteret, laus praemissa solidaret, et qui commotos eos vicini finis suspicione cognoverat, non jam redarguebat motos, sed quasi transacta nesciens, adhuc commoveri prohibebat, ut dum de ipsa levitate motionis praedicatori suo se incognitos crederent, tanto reprehensibiles fieri, quanto et cognosci ab illo formidarent.

CAPUT IX

Quomodo admonendi sint impatientes et patientes

ALITER admonendi sunt impatientes, atque aliter patientes. Dicendum namque est impatientibus, quia dum refrenare spiritum negligunt, per multa etiam, quae non appetunt, iniquitatum abrupta rapiuntur: quia videlicet mentem impellit furor, quo non trahit desiderium, et agit commota velut nesciens, unde post doleat sciens. Dicendum quoque impatientibus, quia dum motionis impulsu praecipites quaedam velut alienati peragunt, vix mala sua, postquam fuerint perpetrata, cognoscunt. Qui dum perturbationi

* 2 Thess. i, 3. † 2 Thess. ii, 1.

suae minime obsistunt, etiam si qua a se tranquilla mente fuerant bene gesta, confundunt, et improviso impulsu destruunt, quidquid forsitan diu labore provido construxerunt; ipsa namque, quae mater est omnium custosque virtutum, per impatientiae vitium virtus amittitur caritatis. Scriptum quippe est: "Caritas patiens est."* Igitur cum minime est patiens, caritas non est. Per hoc quoque impatientiae vitium ipsa virtutum nutrix doctrina dissipatur. Scriptum namque est: "Doctrina viri per patientiam noscitur."† Tanto ergo quisque minus ostenditur doctus, quanto minus convincitur patiens. Neque enim potest veraciter bona docendo impendere, si vivendo nescit aequanimiter aliena mala tolerare.

Per hoc quoque impatientiae vitium plerumque mentem arrogantiae culpa transfigit, quia dum despici in mundo hoc quisque non patitur, bona, si qua sibi occulta sunt, ostentare conatur, atque sic per impatientiam usque ad arrogantiam ducitur: dumque ferre despectionem non potest, detegendo semetipsum in ostentatione gloriatur. Unde scriptum est: "Melior est patiens arrogante."‡ Quia videlicet eligit patiens quaelibet mala perpeti, quam per ostentationis vitium bona sua occulta cognosci. At contra eligit arrogans bona de se vel falsa jactari, ne mala possit vel minima perpeti. Quia igitur, cum patientia relinquitur, etiam bona reliqua, quae jam gesta sunt, destruuntur, recte ad Ezechielem in altari Dei fieri fossa praecipitur, ut in ea videlicet superposita holocausta serventur.§ Si enim in altari fossa non esset, omne, quod in eo sacrificium reperiret, superveniens aura dispergeret.

* 1 Cor. xiii, 14. † Prov. xix, 11. ‡ Eccles vii, 9.
§ Ezec. xliii, 13.

Quid vero accipimus altare Dei, nisi animam justi, quae, quot bona egerit, tot super se ante ejus oculos sacrificia imponit? Quid autem est altaris fossa, nisi bonorum patientia, quae, dum mentem ad adversa toleranda humiliat, quasi more foveae hanc in imo positam demonstrat? Fossa ergo in altari fiat, ne superpositum sacrificium aura dispergat: id est, electorum mens patientiam custodiat, ne commota vento impatientiae et hoc, quod bene operata est, amittat. Bene autem haec eadem fossa unius cubiti esse monstratur,* quia nimirum, si patientia non deseritur, unitatis mensura servatur. Unde et Paulus ait: "Invicem onera vestra portate, et sic adimplebitis legem Christi." † Lex quippe Christi est caritas unitatis, quam soli perficiunt, qui nec, cum gravantur, excedunt. Audiant impatientes, quod scriptum est: "Melior est patiens viro forti, et qui dominatur animo suo, expugnatore urbium." ‡ Minor enim est victoria urbium, quia extra sunt, quae subiguntur: valde autem majus est, quod per patientiam vincitur; quia ipse a se animus superatur, et semetipsum sibimetipsi subjicit, quando eum patientia intra se frenare compellit. Audiant impatientes, quod electis suis Veritas dicit: "In patientia vestra possidebitis animas vestras." § Sic enim conditi mirabiliter sumus, ut ratio animam, et anima possideat corpus. Jus vero animae a corporis possessione repellitur, si non prius anima a ratione possidetur. Custodem igitur conditionis nostrae patientiam Dominus esse monstravit, qui in ipsa nos possidere nosmetipsos docuit. Quanta ergo sit impatientiae culpa, cognoscimus, per quam et hoc ipsum amittimus possidere, quod sumus.

* Ezec. xliii, 13. † Gal. vi, 2. ‡ Prov. xvi, 32. § Luc. xxi, 19.

Audiant impatientes, quod per Salomonem rursum dicitur: "Totum spiritum suum profert stultus, sapiens autem differt et reservat in posterum."* Impatientia quippe impellente agitur, ut totus foras spiritus proferatur, quem idcirco perturbatio citius ejicit, quia nulla interius disciplina sapientiae circumcludit. Sapiens autem differt, et reservat in posterum. Laesus enim in praesens se ulcisci non desiderat, quia etiam tolerans parci optat, sed tamen juste vindicari omnia extremo judicio non ignorat.

At contra admonendi sunt patientes, ne in eo, quod exterius portant, exterius doleant: ne tantae virtutis sacrificium, quod integrum foras immolant, intus malitiae peste corrumpant, et cum ab hominibus non agnoscitur, sed tamen sub divina examinatione peccatur, tanto deterior culpa doloris fiat, quanto sibi ante homines virtutis speciem vindicat.

Dicendum itaque est patientibus, ut studeant diligere, quos sibi necesse est tolerare, ne si patientiam dilectio non sequatur, in deteriorem culpam odii virtus ostensa vertatur. Unde Paulus cum diceret: "Caritas patiens est," illico adjunxit: "Benigna est":† videlicet ostendens, quia, quos ex patientia tolerat, amare etiam ex benignitate non cessat. Unde idem doctor egregius cum patientiam discipulis suaderet, dicens: "Omnis amaritudo, et ira, indignatio, et clamor, et blasphemia tollatur a vobis":‡ quasi cunctis exterius jam bene compositis ad interiora convertitur, dum subjungit: "cum omni malitia":§ quia nimirum frustra indignatio, clamor et blasphemia ab exterioribus tollitur, si in interioribus vitiorum mater malitia dominatur,

* Prov. xxix, 11. † 1 Cor. xiii, 14. ‡ Eph. iv, 31.
§ Ibid.

et incassum foras nequitia ex ramis inciditur, si surrectura multiplicius intus in radice servatur. Unde et per semetipsam Veritas dicit: "Diligite inimicos vestros, bene facite his, qui oderunt vos, et orate pro persequentibus et calumniantibus vos."* Virtus itaque est coram hominibus, adversarios tolerare; sed virtus coram Deo, diligere: quia hoc solum Deus sacrificium accipit, quod ante ejus oculos in altari boni operis flamma caritatis incendit. Hinc est quod rursum quibusdam patientibus, nec tamen diligentibus dicit: "Quid autem vides festucam in oculo fratris tui, et trabem in oculo tuo non vides?"† Perturbatio quippe impatientiae, festuca est; malitia vero in corde, trabes in oculo. Illam namque aura tentationis agitat, hanc autem consummata nequitia pene immobiliter portat. Recte vero illic subjungitur: "Hypocrita, ejice primum trabem de oculo tuo, et tunc videbis ejicere festucam de oculo fratris tui."‡ Ac si dicatur menti iniquae interius dolenti, et sanctam se exterius per patientiam demonstranti: Prius a te molem malitiae excute, et tunc alios de impatientiae levitate reprehende, ne, dum non studes simulationem vincere, pejus tibi sit aliena prava tolerare.

Evenire etiam plerumque patientibus solet, ut eo quidem tempore, quo vel adversa patiuntur, vel contumelias audiunt, nullo dolore pulsentur, et sic patientiam exhibeant, ut custodire etiam cordis innocentiam non omittant: sed cum post paululum haec ipsa, quae pertulerint, ad memoriam revocant, igne se doloris inflammant, argumenta ultionis inquirunt, et mansuetudinem, quam tolerantes habuerunt, retractantes in malitiam vertunt. Quibus citius a praedicante succurritur, si, quae sit hujus permutationis causa, pan-

* Luke vi, 27. † Matt. vii, 3. ‡ Matt. v. 5.

datur. Callidus namque adversarius bellum contra duos movet, unum videlicet inflammans, ut contumelias prior inferat, alterum provocans, ut contumelias laesus reddat. Sed plerumque dum hujus jam victor est, qui injuriam persuasus irrogat, ab illo vincitur, qui illatam sibi aequanimiter portat. Unius ergo victor, quem commovendo subjugavit, tota contra alterum virtute se erigit, eumque obsistentem fortiter et vincentem dolet: quem quia commovere in ipsa contumeliarum jaculatione non potuit, ab aperto certamine, interim quiescens, et secreta suggestione cogitationem lacessens aptum deceptionis tempus inquirit. Quia enim publico bello perdidit, ad exercendas occulte insidias exardescit. Quietis namque tempore jam ad victoris animum redit, et vel rerum damna, aut injuriarum jacula ad memoriam reducit, cunctaque, quae sibi illata sunt, vehementer exaggerans intolerabilia ostendit: tantoque mentem moerore conturbat, ut plerumque vir patiens illa se aequanimiter tolerasse post victoriam captivus erubescat, seque non reddidisse contumelias doleat, et deteriora rependere, si occasio praebeatur, quaerat. Quibus ergo isti sunt similes, nisi his, qui per fortitudinem in campo victores sunt, sed per negligentiam postmodum intra urbis claustra capiuntur? Quibus sunt similes, nisi iis, quos irruens gravis languor a vita non subtrahit, sed leniter veniens recidiva febris occidit? Admonendi sunt igitur patientes, ut cor post victoriam muniant, ut hostem publico bello superatum insidiari moeniis mentis intendant; ut languorem plus reserpentem timeant, ne hostis callidus eo in deceptione postmodum majori exsultatione gaudeat, quo illa dudum contra se rigida colla victorum calcat.

CAPUT X

Quomodo admonendi benevoli et invidi

ALITER admonendi sunt benevoli, atque aliter invidi. Admonendi namque sunt benevoli, ut sic alienis bonis congaudeant, quatenus habere et propria concupiscant. Sic proximorum facta diligendo laudent, ut ea etiam imitando multiplicent, ne si in hoc praesentis vitae stadio ad certamen alienum devoti fautores, sed pigri spectatores assistant, eo post certamen sine bravio remaneant, quo nunc in certamine non laborant, et tunc eorum palmas afflicti respiciant, in quorum nunc laboribus otiosi perdurant. Valde quippe peccamus, si aliena bene gesta non diligimus. Sed nil mercedis agimus, si ea, quae diligimus, in quantum possumus, non imitamur. Dicendum itaque est benevolis, quia, si imitari bona minime festinant, quae laudantes approbant, sic eis virtutum sanctitas sicut stultis spectatoribus ludicrarum artium vanitas placet. Illi namque aurigarum et histrionum gesta favoribus efferunt, nec tamen tales esse desiderant, quales illos conspiciunt esse, quos laudant. Mirantur eos placita egisse, sed tamen devitant similiter placere. Dicendum est benevolis, ut cum proximorum facta conspiciunt, ad suum cor redeant, et de alienis actibus non praesumant, ne bona laudent, et agere recusent. Gravius quippe extrema ultione feriendi sunt, quibus placuit, quod imitari noluerunt.

Admonendi sunt invidi, ut perpendant, quantae caecitatis sint, qui alieno provectu deficiunt, aliena exsultatione contabescunt. Quantae infe-

licitatis sint, qui melioratione proximi deteriores fiunt; dumque augmenta alienae prosperitatis aspiciunt, apud semetipsos anxie afflicti cordis sui peste moriuntur. Quid istis infelicius, quos dum conspecta felicitas afficit, poena nequiores reddit? Aliorum vero bona, quae habere non possunt, si diligerent, sua facerent. Sic quippe sunt universi consistentes in fide, sicut multa membra uno in corpore; quae per officium quidem diversa sunt, sed eo, quo sibi vicissim congruunt, unum fiunt. Unde fit, ut pes per oculum videat, et per pedes oculi gradiantur; ori auditus aurium serviat, et ad usum suum auribus oris lingua concurrat, suffragetur venter manibus, ventri operentur manus. In ipsa igitur corporis positione accipimus, quod in actione servemus. Nimis itaque turpe est non imitari, quod sumus. Nostra sunt nimirum, quae, etsi imitari non possumus, amamus in aliis, et amantium fiunt, quaeque amantur in nobis. Hinc ergo pensent invidi, caritas quantae virtutis est, quae alieni laboris opera, nostra sine labore facit. Dicendum itaque est invidis, quia dum se a livore minime custodiunt, in antiquam versuti hostis nequitiam demerguntur. De illo namque scriptum est: "Invidia autem diaboli mors intravit in orbem terrarum." * Quia enim ipse coelum perdidit, condito hoc homini invidit, et damnationem suam perditus adhuc alios perdendo cumulavit. Admonendi sunt invidi, ut cognoscant, quantis lapsibus succrescentis ruinae subjaceant; quia dum livorem a corde non projiciunt, ad apertas operum nequitias devolvuntur. Nisi enim Cain invidisset acceptam fratris hostiam, minime pervenisset ad extinguendam vitam. Unde scriptum est: "Et respexit Dominus ad Abel et ad munera ejus; ad

* Sap. ii, 24.

Cain vero et ad munera ejus non respexit. Iratusque est Cain vehementer, et concidit vultus ejus." * Livor itaque sacrificii fratricidii seminarium fuit. Nam quem meliorem se esse doluit, ne utcunque esset, amputavit. Dicendum est invidis, quia dum se ista intrinsecus peste consumunt, etiam quidquid in se aliud boni habere videntur, interimunt. Unde scriptum est: "Vita carnium sanitas cordis, putredo ossium invidia." † Quid enim per carnes nisi infirma quaedam ac tenera, et quid per ossa nisi fortia acta signantur? Et plerumque contigit, ut quidam cum cordis innocentia in nonnullis suis actibus infirmi videantur, quidam vero jam quaedam ante humanos oculos robusta exerceant, sed tamen erga aliorum bona intus invidiae pestilentia tabescant. Bene ergo dicitur: "Vita carnium sanitas cordis": quia si mentis innocentia custoditur, etiam si qua foris infirma sunt, quandoque roborantur. Et recte illic subditur: "Putredo ossium invidia": quia per livoris vitium ante Dei oculos pereunt, etiam quae humanis oculis fortia videntur. Ossa quippe per invidiam putrescere, est quaedam etiam robusta deprimere.

CAPUT XI

Quomodo admonendi simplices et versipelles

ALITER admonendi sunt simplices, atque aliter impuri. Laudandi sunt simplices, quod studeant nunquam falsa dicere, sed admonendi sunt, ut noverint nonnunquam vera reticere. Sicut enim semper dicentem falsitas laesit, ita nonnunquam quibusdam audita vera nocuerunt. Unde coram discipulis Dominus locutionem suam si-

* Gen. iv, 4. † Prov. xiv, 30.

lentio temperans ait: "Multa habeo vobis dicere, sed nunc non potestis illa portare." * Admonendi sunt igiter simplices, ut sicut fallaciam semper utiliter vitant, ita veritatem semper utiliter proferant. Admonendi sunt, ut simplicitatis bono prudentiam adjungant, quatenus sic securitatem de simplicitate possideant, ut circumspectionem prudentiae non amittant. Hinc namque per doctorem gentium dicitur: "Volo vos sapientes esse in bono, simplices autem in malo." † Hinc electos suos per semetipsam Veritas admonet dicens: "Estote prudentes sicut serpentes, et simplices sicut columbae." ‡ Quia videlicet in electorum cordibus debet et simplicitatem columbae astutia serpentis acuere, et serpentis astutiam columbae simplicitas temperare: quatenus nec seducti per prudentiam calleant, nec ab intellectus studio ex simplicitate torpescant.

At contra admonendi sunt impuri, ut quam gravis sit, quem cum culpa sustinent, duplicitatis labor, agnoscant. Dum enim deprehendi metuunt, semper improbas defensiones quaerunt, semper pavidis suspicionibus agitantur. Nil autem est ad defendendum puritate tutius, nil ad dicendum veritate facilius. Nam dum fallaciam suam tueri cogitur, duro cor labore fatigatur. Hinc namque scriptum est: "Labor labiorum ipsorum operiet eos." § Qui enim nunc implet, ‖ tunc operit; quia cujus nunc animum per blandam inquietudinem exserit, tunc per asperam retributionem premit. Hinc per Jeremiam dicitur: "Docuerunt linguam suam loqui mendacium, ut inique agerent, laboraverunt." ¶ Ac si aperte diceretur: Qui

* Joan. xvi, 12. † Rom. xvi, 19. ‡ Matt. x, 16.
§ Psa. cxxxix, 10. ‖ Jer. ix, 5.
¶ *Implet*; scil. qui labor suam fallaciam tuendi implet labia, tunc etc.

amici esse veritatis sine labore poterant, ut peccent, laborant; cumque vivere simpliciter renuunt, laboribus exigunt, ut moriantur. Nam plerumque in culpa deprehensi, dum quales sint cognosci refugiunt, sese sub fallaciae velamine abscondunt, et hoc quod peccant, quodque jam aperte cernitur, excusare moliuntur; ita ut saepe is, qui eorum culpas corripere studet, aspersae falsitatis nebulis seductus pene amisisse se videat, quod de eis jam certum tenebat. Unde recte sub Judaeae specie per prophetam contra peccantem animam excusantemque se dicitur: "Ibi habuit foveam ericius."* Ericii quippe nomine impurae mentis seseque callide defendentis duplicitas designatur: quia videlicet ericius cum apprehenditur, ejus et caput cernitur, et pedes videntur, et corpus omne conspicitur; sed mox ut apprehensus fuerit, semetipsum in sphaeram colligit, pedes introrsus subtrahit, caput abscondit, et intra tenentis manus totum simul amittitur, quod totum simul ante videbatur. Sic nimirum sic impurae mentes sunt, cum in suis excessibus comprehenduntur. Caput enim ericii cernitur, quia, quo initio ad culpam peccator accesserit, videtur. Pedes ericii conspiciuntur; quia, quibus vestigiis nequitia sit perpetrata, cognoscitur, et tamen, adductis repente excusationibus impura mens introrsus pedes colligit, quia cuncta iniquitatis suae vestigia abscondit. Caput subtrahit. quia miris defensionibus nec inchoasse se malum aliquod ostendit. Et quasi sphaera in manu tenentis remanet: quia is, qui corripit, cuncta, quae jam cognoverat, subito amittens involutum intra conscientiam peccatorem tenet, et qui totum jam deprehendendo viderat, tergiversione pravae defensionis illusus totum pariter ignorat. Fove-

* Isa. xxxiv, 15.

am ergo habet ericius in reprobis; quia malitiosae mentis duplicitas sese intra se colligens abscondit in tenebris defensionis.

Audiant impuri, quod scriptum est: "Qui ambulat simpliciter, ambulat confidenter."* Fiducia quippe magnae securitatis est simplicitas actionis. Audiant, quod sapientis ore dicitur: "Spiritus sanctus disciplinae effugiet fictum."† Audiant, quod scriptura rursum teste perhibetur: "Cum simplicibus sermocinatio ejus."‡ Deo enim sermocinari, est per illustrationem suae praesentiae humanis mentibus arcana revelare. Cum simplicibus igitur sermocinari dicitur, quia de supernis mysteriis illorum mentes radio suae visitationis illuminat, quos nulla umbra duplicitatis obscurat. Est autem speciale duplicium malum quia dum perversa et duplici actione ceteros fallunt, quasi praestantius ceteris prudentes se esse gloriantur; et quia districtionem retributionis non considerant, damnis suis miseri exsultant. Audiant autem, quomodo super illos propheta Sophonias vim divinae animadversionis intendat dicens: "Ecce dies Domini venit magnus et horribilis, dies irae, dies illa, dies tenebrarum et caliginis, dies nebulae et turbinis, dies tubae et clangoris super omnes civitates munitas, et super omnes angulos excelsos."§ Quid enim per civitates munitas exprimitur, nisi suspectae mentes et fallaci semper defensione circumdatae, quae quoties earum culpa corripitur, veritatis ad se jacula non admittunt? Et quid per excelsos angulos (duplex quippe semper est in angulis paries) nisi impura corda signantur? quae dum veritatis simplicitatem fugiunt, ad semetipsa quodammodo duplicitatis perversitate

* Prov. x, 9. † Sap. i, 5. ‡ Prov. iii, 32
§ i, 14.

replicantur, et quod est deterius, apud cogitationes suas in fastu prudentiae ex ipsa se culpa impuritatis extollunt. Dies igitur Domini vindictae atque animadversionis plena super civitates munitas et super excelsos angulos venit, quia ira extremi judicii humana corda et defensionibus contra veritatem clausa destruit, et duplicitatibus involuta dissolvit. Tunc enim munitae civitates cadunt, quia mentes Deo impenetratae damnabuntur. Tunc excelsi anguli corruunt; quia corda, quae se per impuritatis prudentiam erigunt, per justitiae sententiam prosternuntur.

CAPUT XII

Quomodo admonendi sunt incolumes et aegri

ALITER admonendi sunt incolumes, atque aliter aegri. Admonendi sunt incolumes, ut salutem corporis exerceant ad salutem mentis; ne si acceptae incolumitatis gratiam ad usum nequitiae inclinent dono deteriores fiant, et eo postmodum supplicia graviora mereantur, quo nunc largioribus bonis Dei male uti non metuunt. Admonendi sunt incolumes, ne opportunitatem salutis in perpetuum promerendae despiciant. Scriptum namque est: "Ecce nunc tempus acceptabile, ecce nunc dies salutis."* Admonendi sunt, ne placere Deo, si cum possunt, noluerint, cum voluerint, sero non possint. Hinc est enim, quod eos post sapientia deserit, quos prius diutius renuentes vocavit dicens: "Vocavi, et renuistis; extendi manum meam, et non fuit, qui aspiceret: despexistis omne consilium meum, et increpationes meas neglexistis: ego quoque in interitu vestro ridebo, et subsannabo, cum vobis,

* 2 Cor. vi, 2.

quod timebatis, advenerit."* Et rursum: "Tunc invocabunt me, et non exaudiam; mane consurgent, et non invenient me."† Salus itaque corporis quando ad bene operandum accepta despicitur, quanti sit muneris, amissa sentitur. Et infructuose ad ultimum quaeritur, quae congruo concessa tempore utiliter non habetur. Unde bene per Salomonem rursum dicitur: "Ne des alienis honorem tuum, et annos tuos crudeli: ne forte impleantur extranei viribus tuis, et labores tui sint in domo aliena, et gemas in novissimis, quando consumpseris carnes et corpus tuum."‡ Qui namque alieni a nobis sunt, nisi maligni spiritus, qui a coelestis sunt patriae sorte separati? Quis vero honor noster est, nisi quia in luteis corporibus conditi ad Conditoris tamen nostri sumus imaginem et similitudinem creati? Vel quis alius crudelis est, nisi ille angelus apostata, qui et semetipsum poena mortis superbiendo perculit, et inferre mortem humano generi etiam perditus non pepercit? Honorem itaque suum alienis dat, qui ad Dei imaginem et similitudinem conditus vitae suae tempora malignorum spirituum voluptatibus administrat. Annos etiam suos crudeli tradit, qui ad voluntatem male dominantis adversarii accepta vivendi spatia expendit. Ubi bene subditur: "Ne forte impleantur extranei viribus tuis, et labores tui sint in domo aliena." Quisquis enim per acceptam valetudinem corporis, per tributam sibi sapientiam mentis, non exercendis virtutibus, sed perpetrandis vitiis elaborat, nequaquam suis viribus suam domum, sed extraneorum habitacula, id est, immundorum spirituum facta multiplicat, nimirum vel luxuriando vel superbiendo agens, ut etiam, se addito, perditorum

* Prov. i, xxiv. † Ibid. v, 28. ‡ Prov. v, 9 s.

numerus crescat. Bene autem subditur: "Et gemas in novissimis, quando consumpseris carnes et corpus tuum." Plerumque enim accepta salus carnis per vitia expenditur; sed cum repente subtrahitur, cum molestiis caro atteritur, cum jam egredi anima urgetur, diu male habita quasi ad bene vivendum salus amissa requiritur. Et tunc gemunt homines, quod Deo servire noluerunt, quando damna negligentiae suae recuperare serviendo nequaquam possunt. Unde alias dicitur: "Cum occideret eos, tunc requirebant eum."*

At contra admonendi sunt aegri, ut eo se filios Dei sentiant, quo illos disciplinae flagella castigant. Nisi enim correctis hereditatem dare disponeret, erudire eos per molestias non curaret. Hinc namque ad Joannem Dominus per angelum dicit: "Ego quos amo, arguo et castigo."† Hinc rursum scriptum est: "Fili mi, noli negligere disciplinam Domini, neque fatigeris, cum ab eo argueris. Quem enim diligit Dominus, castigat; flagellat autem omnem filium, quem recipit."‡ Hinc Psalmista ait: "Multae tribulationes justorum, et de omnibus his liberavit eos Dominus."§ Hinc quoque beatus Job in dolore exclamans ait: "Si justus fuero, non levabo caput, saturatus afflictione et miseria."‖ Dicendum est aegris, ut si coelestem patriam suam credunt, necessario in hac labores velut in aliena patiantur. Hinc est enim, quod lapides extra tunsi sunt, ut in constructione templi Domini absque mallei sonitu ponerentur; quia videlicet nunc foris per flagella tundimur, ut intus in templum Dei postmodum sine disci-

* Ps. lxxvii, 34. † Apoc. iii, 19.
‡ Prov. iii, 11; Heb. xii, 5. § Ps. xxxiii, 20.
‖ Ibid. x, 15.

plinae percussione disponamur: quatenus quidquid in nobis est superfluum, modo percussio resecet, et tunc sola nos in aedificio concordia caritatis liget. Admonendi sunt aegri, ut considerent pro percipiendis terrenis hereditatibus quam dura carnales filios disciplinae flagella castigent. Quae ergo nobis divinae correptionis poena gravis est, per quam et nunquam amittenda hereditas percipitur, et semper mansura supplicia vitantur? Hinc etenim Paulus ait: "Patres quidem carnis nostrae habuimus eruditores, et reverebamur eos; non multo magis obtemperabimus Patri spirituum, et vivemus? Et illi quidem in tempore paucorum dierum secundum voluntatem suam erudiebant nos; hic autem ad id quod utile est in recipiendo sanctificationem ejus." *

Admonendi sunt aegri, ut considerent, quanta salus cordis sit molestia corporalis, quae ad cognitionem sui mentem revocat, et quam plerumque salus abjicit, infirmitatis memoriam reformat: ut animus, qui extra se in elationem ducitur, cui sit conditioni subditus, ex percussa, quam sustinet, carne memoretur. Quod recte per Balaam (si tamen vocem Dei subsequi obediendo voluisset) in ipsa ejus itineris retardatione signatur. Balaam namque pervenire ad propositum tendit, sed ejus votum animal, cui praesidet praepedit.† Prohibitione quippe immorata asina angelum videt, quem humana mens non videt; quia plerumque caro per molestias tarda flagello suo menti Deum indicat, quem mens ipsa carni praesidens non videbat, ita ut anxietatem spiritus proficere in hoc mundo cupientis, velut iter tendentis impediat, donec ei invisibilem, qui sibi obviat, innotescat. Unde et bene per Petrum

* Heb. xii, 9 s. † Num. xxii, 23.

dicitur: "Correptionem habuit suae vesaniae subjugale mutum, quod in hominis voce loquens prohibuit prophetae insipientiam."* Insanus quippe homo a subjugali muto corripitur, quando elata mens humilitatis bonum, quod tenere debeat, ab afflicta carne memoratur. Sed hujus correptionis donum idcirco Balaam non obtinuit, quia ad maledicendum pergens vocem, non mentem, mutavit. Admonendi sunt aegri, ut considerent, quanti sit muneris molestia corporalis, quae et admissa peccata diluit, et ea, quae admitti poterant, compescit: quae sumpta ab exterioribus plagis concussae menti poenitentiae vulnera infligit. Unde scriptum est: "Livor vulneris abstergit mala, et plagae in secretioribus ventris."† Mala enim livor vulneris abstergit, quia flagellorum dolor vel cogitatas vel perpetratas nequitias diluit. Solet vero ventris appellatione mens accipi; quia sicut venter consumit escas, ita mens pertractando excoquit curas. Quia enim venter mens dicitur, ea sententia docetur, qua scriptum est: "Lucerna Domini spiraculum hominis, quae investigat omnia secreta ventris."‡ Ac si diceret: Divini afflatus illuminatio, cum in mentem hominis venerit, eam sibimetipsi illuminans ostendit, quae ante Spiritus sancti adventum cogitationes pravas et portare poterat, et pensare nesciebat. Livor ergo vulneris abstergit mala, et plagae in secretioribus ventris: quia cum exterius percutimur, ad peccatorum nostrorum memoriam taciti afflictique revocamur, atque ante oculos nostros cuncta, quae a nobis sunt male gesta, reducimus, et per hoc, quod foris patimur, magis intus, quod fecimus, dolemus. Unde fit, ut inter aperta vulnera corporis amplius nos abluat plaga secreta

* 2 Pet. ii, 2. † Prov. xx, 30. ‡ Prov. xx, 27.

ventris, quia sanat nequitias pravi operis occultum vulnus doloris.

Admonendi sunt aegri, quatenus patientiae virtutem servent, ut incessanter, quanta Redemptor noster ab his, quos creaverat, pertulit mala, considerent: quod tot abjecta conviciorum probra sustinuit: quod de manu antiqui hostis captivorum animas quotidie rapiens insultantium alapas accepit: quod aqua salutis nos diluens a perfidorum sputis faciem non abscondit: quod advocatione sua nos ab aeternis suppliciis liberans tacitus flagella toleravit: quod inter angelorum choros perennes nobis honores tribuens colaphos pertulit: quod a peccatorum nos punctionibus salvans spinis caput supponere non recusavit: quod aeterna nos dulcedine inebrians in siti sua fellis amaritudinem accepit: quod qui pro nobis Patrem, quamvis divinitate esset aequalis, adoravit, sub irrisione adoratus tacuit: quod vitam mortuis praeparans usque ad mortem Ipse Vita pervenit. Cur itaque asperum creditur, ut a Deo homo tolerat flagella pro malis, si tanta Deus ab hominibus pertulit mala pro bonis? Aut quis sana intelligentia de percussione sua ingratus existat, si ipse hinc sine flagello non exiit, qui hic sine peccato vixit?

CAPUT XIII

Quomodo admonendi, qui flagella metuunt, et qui contemnunt

ALITER admonendi sunt, qui flagella metuunt, et propterea innocenter vivunt; atque aliter admonendi sunt, qui sic in iniquitate duruerunt, ut neque per flagella corrigantur. Dicendum namque est flagella timentibus, ut et

bona temporalia nequaquam pro magno desiderent, quae adesse etiam pravis vident, et mala praesentia nequaquam velut intolerabilia fugiant, quibus hic plerumque etiam bonos affici non ignorant. Admonendi sunt, ut, si malis veraciter carere desiderant, aeterna supplicia perhorrescant, neque in hoc suppliciorum timore remaneant, sed ad amoris gratiam nutrimento caritatis excrescant. Scriptum quippe est: "Perfecta caritas foras mittit timorem."* Et rursum scriptum est: "Non accepistis spiritum servitutis iterum in timore, sed spiritum adoptionis filiorum, in quo clamamus, Abba pater."† Unde idem doctor iterum dicit: "Ubi spiritus Domini, ibi libertas."‡ Si ergo adhuc a prava actione formidata poena prohibet, profecto formidantis animum nulla spiritus libertas tenet. Nam si poenam non metueret, culpam procul dubio perpetraret. Ignorat itaque mens gratiam libertatis, quam ligat servitus timoris. Bona enim pro semetipsis amanda sunt, et non poenis compellentibus exsequenda. Nam qui propterea bona facit, quia tormentorum mala metuit, vult non esse, quod metuat, ut audenter illicita committat. Unde luce clarius constat, quod coram Deo innocentia amittitur, ante cujus oculos desiderio peccatur.

At contra hi, quos ab iniquitatibus nec flagella compescunt, tanto acriori invectione feriendi sunt, quanto majori insensibilitate duruerunt. Plerumque enim sine dedignatione dedignandi sunt, sine desperatione desperandi; ita dumtaxat, ut et ostensa desperatio formidinem incutiat, et subjuncta admonitio ad spem reducat. Districte itaque contra illos divinae sententiae proferendae sunt, ut ad cognitionem sui considerata aeterna

* 1 Joan iv, 18. † Rom. viii, 15. ‡ 2 Cor. iii, 17.

animadversione revocentur. Audiant enim in se impletum esse, quod scriptum est: "Si contuderis stultum in pila, quasi ptisanas feriente desuper pilo, non auferetur ab eo stultitia ejus."* Contra hos propheta Domino conqueritur dicens: "Attristi eos, et renuerunt accipere disciplinam."† Hinc est, quod Dominus dicit: "Interfeci et perdidi populum istum, et tamen a viis suis non sunt reversi."‡ Hinc rursum ait: "Populus non est reversus ad percutientem se."§ Hinc voce flagellantium propheta conqueritur dicens: "Curavimus Babylonem, et non est sanata."‖ Babylon quippe curatur, nec tamen ad sanitatem reducitur, quando mens in prava actione confusa verba correptionis audit, flagella correptionis percipit, et tamen ad recta salutis itinera redire contemnit. Hinc captivo Israelitico populo, nec tamen ab iniquitate converso Dominus exprobrat dicens: "Versa est mihi domus Israel in scoriam: omnes isti aes, et stannum, et ferrum, et plumbum in medio fornacis."¶ Ac si aperte dicat: Purgare eos per ignem tribulationis volui, et argentum illos vel aurum fieri quaesivi, sed in fornace mihi in aes, stannum, et ferrum, et plumbum versi sunt: quia non ad virtutem, sed ad vitia etiam in tribulatione proruperunt. Aes quippe dum percutitur, amplius metallis ceteris sonitum reddit. Qui igitur in percussione positus erumpit ad sonitum murmurationis, in aes versus est in medio fornacis. Stannum vero cum ex arte componitur, argenti speciem mentitur. Qui ergo simulationis vitio non caret in tribulatione, stannum factus est in fornace. Ferro autem utitur, qui vitae proximi insidiatur. Ferrum itaque in fornace est, qui nocendi malitiam non amittit in

* Prov. xxvii, 22. † Jer. v, 3. ‡ Jer. xv, 7.
§ Isa. ix, 13. ‖ Jer. li, 9. ¶ Ezec. xxii, 18.

tribulatione. Plumbum quoque ceteris metallis est gravius. In fornace ergo plumbum invenitur, qui sic peccati sui pondere premitur, ut etiam in tribulatione positus a terrenis desideriis non levetur. Hinc rursum scriptum est: "Multo labore sudatum est, et non exivit de ea nimia rubigo ejus, neque per ignem."* Ignem quippe nobis tribulationis admovet, ut in nobis rubiginem vitiorum purget; sed nec per ignem rubiginem amittimus, quando et inter flagella vitio non caremus. Hinc propheta iterum dicit: "Frustra conflavit conflator: malitiae eorum non sunt consumptae."†

Sciendum vero est, quod nonnunquam cum inter flagellorum duritiam remanent incorrecti, dulci sunt admonitione mulcendi. Quos enim cruciamenta non corrigunt, nonnunquam ab iniquis actionibus lenia blandimenta compescunt; quia et plerumque aegros, quos fortis purgamentorum potio curare non valuit, ad salutem pristinam tepens aqua revocavit, et nonnulla vulnera, quae curari incisione nequeunt, fomentis olei sanantur. Et durus adamas incisionem ferri minime recipit, sed leni hircorum sanguine mollescit.

CAPUT XIV

Quomodo admonendi taciturni et verbosi

ALITER admonendi sunt nimis taciti, atque aliter multiloquio vacantes. Insinuari namque nimis tacitis debet, quia dum quaedam vitia incaute fugiunt, occulte deterioribus implicantur. Nam saepe linguam quia immoderatius frenant, in corde gravius multiloquium tolerant: ut eo plus cogitationes in mente ferveant, quo illas violenta custodia indiscreti silentii angustat. Quae plerumque tanto latius diffluunt, quanto se esse securius aestimant, quia foris a reprehen-

* Ezec. xxiv, 12. † Jer. vi, 19.

soribus non videntur. Unde nonnunquam mens in superbiam extollitur, et quos loquentes audit, quasi infirmos despicit. Cumque os corporis claudit, quantum se vitiis superbiendo aperiat, non agnoscit. Linguam etenim premit, mentem elevat, et cum suam nequitiam minime considerat, tanto apud se cunctos liberius, quanto et secretius, accusat. Admonendi sunt igitur nimis taciti, ut scire sollicite studeant, non solum quales foris ostendere, sed etiam quales se debeant intus exhibere, ut plus ex cogitationibus occultum judicium, quam ex sermonibus reprehensionem metuant proximorum. Scriptum namque est: "Fili mi, attende sapientiam meam, et prudentiae meae inclina aurem tuam, ut custodias cogitationes."* Nil quippe in nobis est corde fugacius, quod a nobis toties recedit, quoties per pravas cogitationes defluit. Hinc etenim Psalmista ait: "Cor meum dereliquit me."† Hinc ad semetipsum rediens ait: "Invenit servus tuus cor suum, ut oraret te."‡ Cum ergo cogitatio per custodiam restringitur, cor, quod fugere consuevit, invenitur.

Plerumque autem nimis taciti cum nonnulla injusta patiuntur, eo in acriorem dolorem prodeunt, quo ea, quae sustinent, non loquuntur. Nam si illatas molestias tranquille lingua diceret, a conscientia dolor emanaret. Vulnera enim clausa plus cruciant. Nam cum putredo, quae interius fervet, ejicitur, ad salutem dolor aperitur. Scire igitur debent, qui plus, quam expedit, tacent, ne inter molesta, quae tolerant, dum linguam tenent, vim doloris exaggerent. Admonendi sunt enim, ut, si proximos sicut se diligunt, minime illis taceant, unde eos juste reprehendunt. Vocis enim medicamine utrorumque saluti concurritur, dum et ab illo, qui infert, actio prava

* Prov. v, 1. † Ps. xxxix, 13. ‡ 2 Reg. vii, 27.

compescitur, et ab hoc, qui sustinet, doloris fervor vulnere aperto temperatur. Qui enim proximorum mala respiciunt, et tamen in silentio linguam premunt, quasi conspectis vulneribus usum medicaminis subtrahunt, et eo mortis auctores fiunt, quo virus, quod poterant, curare noluerunt. Lingua itaque discrete frenanda est, non insolubiliter obliganda. Scriptum namque est: "Sapiens tacebit usque ad tempus":* ut nimirum, cum opportunum considerat, postposita censura silentii loquendo, quae congruunt, in usum se utilitatis impendat. Et rursum scriptum est: "Tempus tacendi, et tempus loquendi."† Discrete quippe vicissitudinum pensanda sunt tempora, ne aut cum restringi lingua debet, per verba inutiliter defluat: aut cum loqui utiliter potest, semetipsam pigre restringat. Quod bene Psalmista considerans dicit: "Pone, Domine, custodiam ori meo, et ostium circumstantiae labiis meis."‡ Non enim poni ori suo parietem, sed ostium petit, quod videlicet aperitur et clauditur. Unde et nobis caute discendum est, quatenus os discretum et congruo tempore vox aperiat, et rursum congruo taciturnitas claudat.

At contra admonendi sunt multiloquio vacantes, ut vigilanter aspiciant, a quanto rectitudinis statu depereunt, dum per multiplicia verba dilabuntur. Humana etenim mens aquae more circumclusa ad superiora colligitur, quia illud repetit, unde descendit, et relaxata deperit, quia se per infima inutiliter spargit. Quot enim supervacuis verbis a silentii sui censura dissipatur, quasi tot rivis extra se ducitur. Unde et redire interius ad sui cognitionem non sufficit, quia per multiloquium sparsa a secreto se intimae considerationis excludit. Totam vero se insidiantis hostis vulneribus detegit: quia nulla

* Eccli xx, 7. † Eccli iii, 7. ‡ Ps. cxl, 3.

munitione custodiae circumcludit. Unde scriptum est: "Sicut urbs patens et absque murorum ambitu, ita vir, qui non potest in loquendo cohibere spiritum suum."* Quia enim murum silentii non habet, patet inimici jaculis civitas mentis, et cum se per verba extra semetipsam ejicit, apertam se adversario ostendit. Quam tanto ille sine labore superat, quanto et ipsa, quae vincitur, contra semetipsam per multiloquium pugnat.

Plerumque autem, quia per quosdam gradus desidiosa mens in lapsum casus impellitur, dum otiosa cavere verba negligimus, ad noxia pervenimus: ut prius loqui aliena libeat, postmodum detractionibus eorum vitam, de quibus loquitur, mordeat, ad extremum vero usque ad apertas lingua contumelias erumpat. Hinc seminantur stimuli, oriuntur rixae, accenduntur faces odiorum, pax exstinguitur cordium. Unde bene per Salomonem dicitur: "Qui dimittit aquam, caput est jurgiorum."† Aquam quippe dimittere, est linguam in fluxum eloquii relaxare. Quo contra in bona etiam parte iterum dicitur: "Aqua profunda verba ex ore viri."‡ Qui ergo dimittit aquam, caput est jurgiorum; quia, qui linguam non refrenat, concordiam dissipat. Unde e diverso scriptum est: "Qui imponit stulto silentium, iras mitigat."§ Quod autem multiloquio quisque serviens rectitudinem justitiae tenere nequaquam possit, testatur propheta, qui ait: "Vir linguosus non dirigetur super terram."‖ Hinc quoque Salomon iterum dicit: "In multiloquio non deerit peccatum."¶ Hinc Isaias ait: "Cultus justitiae silentium":** videlicet indicans, quia mentis justitia desolatur, quando ab immoderata locutione non parcitur. Hinc Jacobus

* Prov. xxv, 28. † Prov. xvii, 14. ‡ Prov. xviii, 4.
§ Prov. xxvi, 10. ‖ Ps. cxxxix, 12. ¶ Prov. x, 19.
** Prov. xxxii, 17.

ait: "Si quis putat se religiosum esse non refrenans linguam suam, sed seducens cor suum, hujus vana est religio."* Hinc rursum ait: "Sit omnis homo velox ad audiendum, tardus autem ad loquendum."† Hinc iterum, linguae vim definiens, adjungit: "Inquietum malum, plena veneno mortifero."‡ Hinc per semetipsam nos Veritas admonet dicens: "Omne verbum otiosum, quod locuti fuerint homines, reddent de eo rationem in die judicii."§ Otiosum quippe verbum est, quod aut ratione justae necessitatis, aut intentione piae utilitatis caret. Si ergo de otioso sermone ratio exigitur, pensemus, quae poena multiloquium maneat, in quo etiam per noxia verba peccatur.

CAPUT XV

Quomodo admonendi pigri et praecipites

ALITER admonendi sunt pigri, atque aliter praecipites. Illi namque suadendi sunt, ne agenda bona, dum differunt, amittant: isti vero admonendi sunt ne, dum bonorum tempus incaute festinando praeveniunt, eorum merita immutent. Pigris itaque intimandum est, quod saepe, dum opportune agere, quae possumus, nolumus, paulo post, cum volumus, non valemus. Ipsa quippe mentis desidia, dum congruo fervore non accenditur, a bonorum desiderio funditus convalescente furtim torpore mactatur. Unde aperte per Salomonem dicitur: "Pigredo immittit soporem."‖ Piger enim recte sentiendo quasi vigilat, quamvis nil operando torpescat. Sed pigredo soporem immittere dicitur; quia paulisper etiam recte sentiendi vigilantia amittitur, dum a bene operandi studio cessatur. Ubi

* Prov. i, 26. † Prov. v, 19. ‡ Prov. iii, 8.
§ Matt. xii, 36. ‖ Prov. xix, 15.

recte subjungitur: "Et anima dissoluta esuriet." Nam quia se ad superiora stringendo non dirigit, neglectam se inferius per desideria expandit, et dum studiorum sublimium vigore non constringitur, cupiditatis infimae fame sauciatur: ut, quo se per disciplinam ligare dissimulat, eo se esuriens per voluptatum desideria spargat. Hinc ab eodem rursus Salomone scribitur: "In desideriis est omnis otiosus."* Hinc ipsa Veritate praedicante, uno quidem exeunte spiritu munda domus dicitur: sed multiplicius redeunte dum vacat occupatur.† Plerumque piger, dum necessaria agere negligit, quaedam sibi difficilia opponit, quaedam vero incaute formidat, et dum quasi invenit quod velut juste metuat, ostendit, quod in otio quasi non injuste torpescat. Cui recte per Salomonem dicitur: "Propter frigus piger arare noluit: mendicabit ergo aestate, et non dabitur ei."‡ Propter frigus quippe piger non arat, dum desidiae torpore constrictus agere, quae debet, bona dissimulat. Propter frigus piger non arat, dum parva ex adverso mala metuit, et operari maxima praetermittit. Bene autem dicitur: "Mendicabit aestate, et non dabitur ei." Qui enim nunc in bonis operibus non exsudat, cum sol judicii ferventior apparuerit, quia frustra regni aditum postulat, nil accipiens aestate mendicat. Bene huic per eundem Salomonem rursum dicitur: "Qui observat ventum, non seminat, et qui considerat nubes, nunquam metit."§ Quid enim, per ventum, nisi malignorum spirituum tentatio exprimitur? Et quid per nubes, quae moventur a vento, nisi adversitates pravorum hominum designantur? A ventis videlicet impelluntur nubes, quia immundorum spirituum afflatu pravi excitantur

* Prov. xxi, 26. † Matt. xii, 44. ‡ Prov. xx, 4.
§ Eccles. xi, 4.

homines. Qui ergo observat ventum, non seminat, et qui considerat nubes nunquam metit: quia quisquis tentationem malignorum spirituum, quisquis persecutionem pravorum hominum metuit, neque nunc grana boni operis seminat, neque tunc manipulos sanctae retributionis secat.

At contra, praecipites dum bonorum actuum praeveniunt tempus, meritum pervertunt, et saepe in malis corruunt, dum bona minime discernunt. Qui nequaquam quae quando agant, inspiciunt, sed plerumque acta, quia ita non debuerunt agere, cognoscunt. Quibus sub auditoris specie recte apud Salomonem dicitur: "Fili, sine consilio nihil facias, et post factum non poenitebis."* Et rursum: "Palpebrae tuae praecedant gressus tuos."† Palpebrae quippe gressus praecedunt, cum operationem nostram consilia recta praeveniunt. Qui enim negligit considerando praevidere quod facit, gressus tendit, oculos claudit, pergendo iter conficit, sed praevidendo sibimetipsi non antecedit, atque idcirco citius corruit, qui quo pedem operis ponere debeat, per palpebram consilii non attendit.

CAPUT XVI

Quomodo admonendi mansueti et iracundi

ALITER admonendi sunt mansueti, atque aliter iracundi. Nonnunquam enim mansueti, cum praesunt, vicinum et quasi juxta positum torporem desidiae patiuntur. Et plerumque nimia resolutione lenitatis, ultra quam necesse est vigorem districtionis emolliunt. At contra iracundi cum regiminum loca percipiunt, quo impellente ira in mentis vesaniam devolvuntur, eo etiam subditorum vitam dissipata quietis

* Eccli xxxii, 24. † Prov. iv, 25.

tranquillitate confundunt. Quos cum furor agit in praeceps, ignorant, quidquid a semetipsis patiuntur irati. Nonnunquam vero, quod est gravius, irae suae stimulum justitiae zelum putant. Et cum vitium virtus creditur, sine metu culpa cumulatur. Saepe ergo mansueti dissolutionis torpescunt taedio: saepe iracundi rectitudinis falluntur zelo. Illorum itaque virtuti vitium latenter adjungitur: his autem suum vitium quasi virtus fervens videtur. Admonendi sunt igitur illi, ut fugiant, quod juxta ipsos est; isti, quod in ipsis est, attendant: illi, quod non habent, discernant: isti, quod habent. Amplectantur mansueti sollicitudinem, damnent iracundi perturbationem. Admonendi sunt mansueti, ut habere etiam aemulationem justitiae studeant: admonendi sunt iracundi, ut aemulationi, quam se habere existimant, mansuetudinem subjungant. Idcirco namque Spiritus sanctus in columba nobis est et in igne monstratus, quia videlicet omnes, quos implet, et columbae simplicitate mansuetos, et igne zeli ardentes exhibet.

Nequaquam ergo sancto Spiritu plenus est, qui aut in tranquillitate mansuetudinis fervorem aemulationis deserit, aut rursum in aemulationis ardore virtutem mansuetudinis amittit. Quod fortasse melius ostendimus, si in medium Pauli magisterium proferamus, qui duobus discipulis et non diversa caritate praeditis, diversa tamen adjutoria praedicationis impendit. Timotheum namque admonens ait: "Argue, obsecra, increpa in omni patientia et doctrina."* Titum quoque admonet dicens: "Haec loquere, et exhortare, et argue cum omni imperio."† Quid est, quod doctrinam suam tanta arte dispensat, ut in exhibenda hac alteri imperium, atque alteri patientiam proponat, nisi quod mansuetioris spiritus

* 2 Tim. iv, 2. † Ibid. ii, 15.

Titum, et paulo ferventioris vidit esse Timotheum? Illum per aemulationis studium inflammat, hunc per lenitatem patientiae temperat. Illi quod deest jungit, huic quod superest subtrahit. Illum stimulo impellere nititur, hunc freno moderatur. Magnus quippe susceptae Ecclesiae colonus alios palmites, ut crescere debeant, rigat: alios, cum plus justo crescere conspicit, resecat: ne aut non crescendo non ferant fructus, aut immoderate crescendo, quos protulerint, amittant. Sed longe alia est ira, quae sub aemulationis specie subripit, alia, quae turbatum cor et sine justitiae praetextu confundit. Illa enim in hoc, quod debet, inordinate extenditur; haec autem semper in his, quae non debet, inflammatur. Sciendum quippe est, quia in hoc ab impatientibus iracundi differunt, quod illi ab aliis illata non tolerant, isti autem etiam, quae tolerentur, important. Nam iracundi saepe etiam se declinantes insequuntur, rixae occasionem commovent, labore contentionis gaudent; quos tamen melius corrigimus, si in ipsa irae suae commotione declinamus. Perturbati quippe quid audiant ignorant, sed ad se reducti tanto liberius exhortationis verba recipiunt, quanto se tranquillius toleratos erubescunt. Menti autem furore ebriae omne rectum, quod dicitur, perversum videtur. Unde et Nabal ebrio culpam suam Abigail laudabiliter tacuit, quam digesto vino laudabiliter dixit.* Idcirco enim malum, quod fecerat, cognoscere potuit, quia hoc ebrius non audivit.

Cum vero ita iracundi alios impetunt, ut declinari omnino non possint, non aperta exprobratione, sed sub quadam sunt cautela reverentiae parcendo feriendi. Quod melius ostendimus, si Abner factum ad medium deducamus. Hunc quippe cum Asaël vi incautae praecipitationis impete-

* 1 Reg. xxv, 37.

ret, scriptum est: "Locutus est Abner ad Asaël dicens: Recede, noli me persequi, ne compellar confodere te in terram. Qui audire contempsit, et noluit declinare. Percussit ergo eum Abner aversa hasta in inguine, et transfodit eum, et mortuus est."* Cujus enim Asaël typum tenuit, nisi eorum, quos vehementer arripiens furor in praeceps ducit? Qui in eodem furoris impetu tanto caute declinandi sunt, quanto et insane rapiuntur. Unde et Abner, qui nostro sermone patris lucerna dicitur, fugit: quia doctorum lingua, quae supernum Dei lumen indicat, cum per abrupta furoris mentem cujuspiam ferri conspicit, cumque contra irascentem dissimulat verborum jacula reddere, quasi persequentem non vult ferire. Sed cum iracundi nulla consideratione se mitigant, et quasi Asaël persequi et insanire non cessant; necesse est, ut hi, qui furentes conantur reprimere, nequaquam se in furore erigant, sed quidquid est tranquillitatis ostendant; quaedam vero subtiliter proferant, in quibus ex obliquo furentis animum pungant. Unde et Abner cum contra persequentem substitit, non eum recta, sed aversa hasta transforavit. Ex mucrone quippe percutere, est impetu apertae increpationis obviare. Aversa vero hasta persequentem ferire, est furentem tranquille ex quibusdam tangere, et quasi parcendo superare. Asaël autem protinus occumbit, quia commotae mentes, dum et parci sibi sentiunt, et tamen responsorum ratione in intimis sub tranquillitate tanguntur, ab eo, quod se erexerant, statim cadunt. Qui ergo a fervoris sui impetu sub lenitatis percussione resiliunt, quasi sine ferro moriuntur.

* 2 Reg. ii, 22 et 23.

CAPUT XVII

Quomodo admonendi humiles et elati

ALITER admonendi sunt humiles, atque aliter elati. Illis insinuandum est, quam sit vera excellentia, quam sperando tenent: istis vero intimandum est, quam sit nulla temporalis gloria, quam et amplectentes non tenent. Audiant humiles, quam sint aeterna, quae appetunt, quam transitoria, quae contemnunt: audiant elati, quam sint transitoria, quae ambiunt, quam aeterna, quae perdunt. Audiant humiles ex magistra voce Veritatis: "Omnis qui se humiliat, exaltabitur";* audiant elati: "Omnis qui se exaltat, humiliabitur."† Audiant humiles: "Gloriam praecedit humilitas";‡ audiant elati: "Ante ruinam exaltatur spiritus."§ Audiant humiles: "Ad quem respiciam, nisi ad humilem et quietum, et trementem sermones meos?"‖ Audiant elati: "Quid superbit terra et cinis?"¶ Audiant humiles: "Deus humilia respicit"; audiant elati: "Et alta a longe cognoscit."** Audiant humiles: "Quia filius hominis non venit ministrari, sed ministrare";†† audiant elati, "quia initium omnis peccati superbia est."‡‡ Audiant humiles, "quia Redemptor noster humiliavit semetipsum, factus obediens usque ad mortem";§§ audiant elati, quod eorum capite scriptum est: "Ipse est rex super universos filios superbiae."‖‖ Occasio igitur perditionis nostrae facta est superbia diaboli, et argumentum redemptionis nostrae inventa est humilitas Dei. Hostis enim noster inter omnia

* Luc. xviii, 14. † Luc. xviii, 14. ‡ Prov. xv, 33.
§ Prov. xvi, 18. ‖ Isa. lxvi, 2. ¶ Eccli x, 9.
** Ps. cxxxvii, 6. †† Matt. xx, 28. ‡‡ Eccli x, 15.
§§ Phil. ii, 8. ‖‖ Job xli, 25.

conditus voluit videri supra omnia elatus: Redemptor autem noster magnus manens super omnia fieri inter omnia dignatus est parvus.

Dicatur ergo humilibus, quia dum se dejiciunt, ad Dei similitudinem ascendunt: dicatur elatis, quia dum se erigunt, in apostatae angeli imitationem cadunt. Quid itaque elatione dejectius, quae, dum supra se tenditur, ab altitudine verae celsitudinis elongatur? Et quid humilitate sublimius, quae, dum se in ima deprimit, auctori suo manenti super summa conjungit? Est tamen aliud, quod in eis debeat caute pensari: quia saepe quidam humilitatis decipiuntur specie, quidam vero elationis suae ignoratione falluntur. Nam plerumque nonnullis, qui sibi humiles videntur, is, qui hominibus deferri non debet, conjunctus est timor; plerumque vero elatos comitari solet liberae vocis assertio. Et cum quaedam increpanda sunt vitia, illi reticent ex timore, et tamen tacere se aestimant ex humilitate; isti loquuntur per impatientiam elationis, et tamen se credunt loqui per libertatem rectitudinis. Illos, ut perversa non increpent, sub specie humilitatis premit culpa formidinis; istos ad increpanda, quae non debent, aut magis increpanda, quam debent, sub imagine libertatis effrenatio impellit tumoris. Unde et elati admonendi sunt, ne plus, quam decet, sint liberi, et humiles admonendi sunt, ne plus, quam expedit, sint subjecti: ne aut illi defensionem justitiae vertant in exercitationem superbiae; aut isti, dum student plus, quam necesse est, hominibus subjici, compellantur eorum etiam vitia venerari.

Considerandum vero est, quod plerumque elatos utilius corripimus, si eorum correptionibus quaedam laudum fomenta misceamus. Inferenda namque illis sunt aut alia bona, quae in ipsis sunt, aut dicendum certe, quae poterant esse, si

non sunt, et tunc demum resecanda sunt mala, quae nobis displicent, cum prius ad audiendum eorum placabilem mentem fecerint praemissa bona, quae placent. Nam et equos indomitos blanda prius manu tangimus, ut eos nobis plenius postmodum etiam per flagella subigamus. Et amaro pigmentorum poculo mellis dulcedo adjungitur, ne ea, quae saluti profutura est, in ipso gustu aspera amaritudo sentiatur: dum vero gustus per dulcedinem fallitur, humor mortiferus per amaritudinem vacuatur. Ipsa ergo in elatis invectionis exordia permixta sunt laude temperanda, ut dum admittunt favores, quos diligunt, etiam correptiones recipiant, quas oderunt.

Plerumque autem persuadere elatis utilia melius possumus, si profectum eorum nobis potius, quam illis, profuturum dicamus, si eorum meliorationem nobis magis, quam sibi, impendi postulemus. Facile enim ad bonum elatio flectitur, si et aliis ejus inflexio prodesse credatur. Unde Moyses, qui regente se Deo deserti iter aërea columna duce pergebat, cum Hobab cognatum suum a gentilitatis conversatione vellet educere, et omnipotentis Dei dominio subjugare, ait: "Proficiscimur ad locum, quem Dominus daturus est nobis; veni nobiscum, ut bene faciamus tibi; quia Dominus bona promisit Israeli. Cui cum respondisset ille: Non vadam tecum, sed revertar in terram meam, in qua natus sum," illico adjunxit: "Noli nos relinquere; tu enim nosti, in quibus locis per desertum castra ponere debeamus, et eris ductor noster."* Neque enim Moysi mentem ignorantia itineris angustabat, quem et ad prophetiae scientiam cognitio divinitatis expanderat, quem columna exterius praeibat, quem de cunctis interius per conversationem cum Deo sedulam locutio familiaris instruebat.

* Num. x, 29, etc.

Sed videlicet vir providus elato auditori colloquens solatium petivit, ut daret; ducem requirebat in via, ut dux ei fieri potuisset ad vitam. Egit itaque, ut superbus auditor voci ad meliora suadenti eo magis fieret devotus, quo putaretur necessarius, et unde se exhortatorem suum praecedere crederet, inde se sub verbis exhortantis inclinaret.

CAPUT XVIII

Quomodo admonendi pertinaces, et inconstantes

ALITER admonendi sunt pertinaces, atque aliter inconstantes. Illis dicendum est, quod plus de se, quam sunt, sentiunt, et idcirco alienis consiliis non acquiescunt: istis vero intimandum est, quod valde se despicientes negligunt, et ideo levitate cogitationum a suo judicio per temporum momenta flectuntur. Illis dicendum est, quia nisi meliores se ceteris aestimarent, nequaquam cunctorum consilia suae deliberationi postponerent; istis dicendum est, quia, si hoc, quod sunt, utcumque attenderent, nequaquam eos per tot varietatis latera mutabilitatis aura versaret. Illis per Paulum dicitur: "Nolite prudentes esse apud vosmetipsos";* at contra isti audiunt: "Non circumferamur omni vento doctrinae."† De illis per Salomonem dicitur: "Comedent fructus viae suae, suisque consiliis saturabuntur";‡ de istis autem ab eo rursus scribitur: "Cor stultorum dissimile erit."§ Cor quippe sapientum sibimetipsi semper est simile; quia dum rectis persuasionibus acquiescit, constanter se in bono opere dirigit. Cor vero stultorum dissimile est; quia dum mutabilitate se varium exhibet, nunquam id, quod fuerat, manet. Et quia quaedam vitia sicut ex semetipsis gignunt alia, ita ex aliis

* Rom. xii, 16. † Ephes. iv, 14. ‡ Prov. i, 31.
§ Prov. xv, 7.

oriuntur, sciendum summopere est, quod tunc ea corripiendo melius tergimus, cum ab ipso amaritudinis suae fonte siccamus. Pertinacia quippe ex superbia, inconstantia vero ex levitate generatur.

Admonendi igitur sunt pertinaces, ut elationem suae cogitationis agnoscant, et semetipsos vincere studeant; ne dum rectis aliorum suasionibus foris superari despiciunt, intus a superbia captivi teneantur. Admonendi sunt, ut solerter aspiciant, quia Filius hominis, cui una semper cum Patre voluntas est, ut exemplum nobis frangendae nostrae voluntatis praebeat, dicit: "Non quaero voluntatem meam, sed voluntatem ejus, qui misit me, Patris."* Qui ut hujus adhuc virtutis gratiam commendaret, servaturum se hoc in extremo judicio praemisit dicens: "Ego a me ipso non possum facere quidquam, sed sicut audio, judico."† Qua itaque conscientia dedignatur homo alienae voluntati acquiescere, quando Dei et hominis Filius, cum virtutis suae gloriam venit ostendere, testatur se non a semetipso judicare?

At contra admonendi sunt inconstantes, ut mentem gravitate roborent. Tunc enim genimina in se mutabilitatis arefaciunt, cum a corde prius radicem levitatis abscidunt; quia et tunc fabrica robusta construitur, cum prius locus solidus, in quo fundamentum poni debeat, providetur. Nisi ergo ante mentis levitas caveatur, cogitationum inconstantia minime vincitur. A quibus se alienum Paulus fuisse perhibuit, cum dicit: "Numquid levitate usus sum? Aut quae cogito, secundum carnem cogito, ut sit apud me, est et non?"‡ Ac si aperte dicat: Idcirco mutabilitatis aura non moveor, quia levitatis vitio non moveor, quia levitatis vitio non succumbo.

* Joan. v, 30. † Ibid. ‡ 2 Cor. i, 17.

CAPUT XIX

Quomodo admonendi, qui intemperantius, et qui parcius cibo utuntur

ALITER admonendi sunt gulae dediti, atque aliter abstinentes. Illos enim superfluitas locutionis, levitas operis, atque luxuria; istos vere saepe impatientiae, saepe vero superbiae culpa comitatur. Nisi enim gulae deditos immoderata loquacitas raperet, dives ille, qui epulatus quotidie dicitur splendide, in lingua gravius non arderet dicens: "Pater Abraham, miserere mei, et mitte Lazarum, ut intingat extremum digiti sui in aquam, ut refrigeret linguam meam, quia crucior in hac flamma."* Quibus profecto verbis ostenditur, quia epulando quotidie crebrius in lingua peccaverat, qui totus ardens refrigerari se praecipue in lingua requirebat. Rursum quia gulae deditos levitas protinus operis sequitur, auctoritas sacra testatur dicens: "Sedit populus manducare et bibere, et surrexerunt ludere."† Quos plerumque edacitas usque ad luxuriam pertrahit: quia dum satietate venter extenditur, aculei libidinis excitantur. Unde et hosti callido, qui primi hominis sensum in concupiscentia pomi aperuit, sed in peccati laqueo strinxit, divina voce dicitur: "Pectore et ventre repes,"‡ ac si ei aperte diceretur: Cogitatione et ingluvie super humana corda dominaberis. Quia gulae deditos luxuria sequitur, propheta testatur, qui dum aperta narrat occulta denuntiat dicens: "Princeps cocorum destruxit muros Jerusalem."§ Princeps namque cocorum venter est, cui magna cura obsequium a cocis impenditur, ut ipse delectabiliter cibis

* Luc. xvi, 24. † Exod. xxxii, 6. ‡ Gen. iii, 14.
§ Jer. xxxix, 9; et 4 Reg. xxv, 10, sec. LXX.

impleatur. Muri autem Jerusalem virtutes sunt animae, ad desiderium supernae pacis elevatae. Cocorum igitur princeps muros Jerusalem dejicit; quia dum venter ingluvie extenditur, virtutes animae per luxuriam destruuntur.

Quo contra nisi mentes abstinentium plerumque impatientia a sinu tranquillitatis excuteret, nequaquam Petrus, cum diceret: "Ministrate in fide vestra virtutem, in virtute autem scientiam, in scientia autem abstinentiam,"* protinus vigilanter adjungeret dicens: "In abstinentia autem patientiam."† Deesse quippe abstinentibus patientiam praevidit, quae eis ut adesset, admonuit. Rursum nisi cogitationes abstinentium nonnunquam superbiae culpa transfigeret, Paulus minime dixisset: "Qui non manducat, manducantem non judicet."‡ Qui rursum ad alios loquens, dum de abstinentiae virtute gloriantium praecepta perstringeret, adjunxit: "Quae sunt rationem quidem habentia sapientiae in superstitione et humilitate, et non ad parcendum corpori, non in honore aliquo ad saturitatem carnis."§ Qua in re notandum est, quod in disputatione sua praedicator egregius superstitioni humilitatis speciem jungit: quia dum plus, quam necesse est, per abstinentiam caro atteritur, humilitas foris ostenditur, sed de hac ipsa humilitate graviter interius superbitur. Et nisi aliquando mens ex abstinentiae virtute tumesceret, nequaquam hanc velut inter magna merita pharisaeus arrogans studiose numeraret dicens: "Jejuno bis in sabbato."‖ Admonendi ergo sunt gulae dediti, ne in eo, quod escarum delectationi incubant, luxuriae se mucrone transfigant, et quanta sibi per esum loquacitas, quanta mentis levitas insidietur, aspiciant; ne, dum ventri molliter serviunt, vitiorum laqueis

* 2 Pet. i, 5. † Ibid. i, 6. ‡ Rom. xiv, 3.
§ Col. ii, 23. ‖ Luc. xviii, 12.

crudeliter adstringantur. Tanto enim longius a secundo parente receditur, quanto per immoderatum usum, dum manus ad cibum tenditur, parentis primi lapsus iteratur. At contra admonendi sunt abstinentes, ut sollicite semper aspiciant, ne cum gulae vitium fugiunt, acriora his vitia quasi ex virtute generentur; ne dum carnem macerant, ad impatientiam spiritus erumpant, et nulla jam virtus sit, quod caro vincitur, si spiritus ab ira superatur. Aliquando autem dum mens abstinentium ab ira se deprimit, hanc quasi peregrina veniens laetitia corrumpit, et eo abstinentiae bonum deperit, quo sese a spiritalibus vitiis minime custodit. Unde recte per prophetam dicitur: "In diebus jejuniorum vestrorum inveniuntur voluntates vestrae."* Et paulo post: "In judicia et rixas jejunatis, et percutitis pugnis."† Voluntas quippe ad laetitiam pertinet, pugnus ad iram. Incassum ergo per abstinentiam corpus atteritur, si inordinatis dimissa motibus mens vitiis dissipatur. Rursumque admonendi sunt, ut abstinentiam suam et semper sine imminutione custodiant, et nunquam hanc apud occultum judicem eximiae virtutis credant, ne, si fortasse magni esse meriti creditur, cor in elationem sublevetur. Hinc namque per prophetam dicitur: "Numquid tale est jejunium, quod elegi? Sed frange esurienti panem tuum, et egenos vagosque induc in domum tuam."‡

Qua in re pensandum est, virtus abstinentiae quam parva respicitur, quae nonnisi ex aliis virtutibus commendatur. Hinc Joël ait: "Sanctificate jejunium."§ Jejunium quippe sanctificare, est adjunctis aliis bonis dignam Deo abstinentiam carnis ostendere. Admonendi sunt abstinentes, ut noverint, quia tunc placentem Deo

* Isa. lviii, 3. † Ibid. 4. ‡ Isa. lviii, 5. § ii, 15.

abstinentiam offerunt, cum ea, quae sibi de alimentis subtrahunt, indigentibus largiuntur. Solerter namque audiendum est, quod per prophetam Dominus redarguit dicens: "Cum jejunaretis et plangeretis in quinto et in septimo mense per hos septuaginta annos, numquid jejunium jejunastis mihi? Et cum comedistis et bibistis, numquid non vobismetipsis comedistis et vobismetipsis bibistis?"* Non enim Deo, sed sibi quisque jejunat, si ea, quae ventri ad tempus subtrahit, non egenis tribuit, sed ventri postmodum offerenda custodit.

Itaque, ne aut illos appetitus gulae a mentis statu dejiciat, aut istos afflicta caro ex elatione supplantet, audiant illi ex ore Veritatis: "Attendite autem vobis, ne forte graventur corda vestra in crapula et ebrietate, et curis hujus mundi." Ubi utilis quoque pavor adjungitur: "Et superveniat in vos repentina dies illa. Tamquam laqueus enim superveniet in omnes, qui sedent super faciem omnis terrae."† Audiant isti: "Non quod intrat in os, coinquinat hominem, sed quod procedit ex ore, coinquinat hominem."‡ Audiant illi: "Esca ventri, et venter escis; Deus autem et hunc et has destruet."§ Et rursum: "Non in comessationibus et ebrietatibus."‖ Et rursum: "Esca nos non commendat Deo."¶ Audiant isti, "quia omnia munda mundis: coinquinatis autem et infidelibus nihil est mundum."** Audiant illi: "Quorum Deus venter est, et gloria in confusione ipsorum."†† Audiant isti: "Discedent quidam a fide." Et paulo post: "Prohibentium nubere, abstinere a cibis, quos Deus creavit ad percipiendum cum gratiarum actione fidelibus et iis, qui cognove-

* Zach. vii, 5 s. † Luc. xxi, 34. ‡ Matt. xv, 11.
§ 1 Cor. vi, 13. ‖ Rom. xiii, 13. ¶ 1 Cor. viii, 8.
** Tit. i, 15. †† Phil. iii, 19.

runt veritatem."* Audiant illi: "Bonum est non manducare carnem, neque bibere vinum: neque in quo frater tuus scandalizatur."† Audiant isti: "Modico vino utere propter stomachum et frequentes tuas infirmitates."‡ Quatenus et illi discant cibos carnis inordinate non appetere, et isti creaturam Dei, quam non appetunt, non audeant condemnare.

CAPUT XX

Quomodo admonendi, qui sua distribuunt, et qui rapiunt aliena

ALITER admonendi sunt, qui jam sua misericorditer tribuunt, atque aliter qui adhuc et aliena rapere contendunt. Admonendi namque sunt, qui jam sua misericorditer tribuunt, ne cogitatione tumida super eos se, quibus terrena largiuntur, extollant; ne idcirco se meliores aestiment, qui contineri per se ceteros vident. Nam terrenae domus dominus famulorum ordines ministeriaque dispertiens hos, ut regant, illos vero statuit, ut ab aliis regantur. Istos jubet, ut necessaria ceteris praebeant: illos, ut accepta ab aliis sumant. Et tamen plerumque offendunt, qui regunt, et in patrisfamilias gratia permanent, qui reguntur. Iram merentur, qui dispensatores sunt; sine offensione perdurant, qui ex aliena dispensatione subsistunt. Admonendi sunt igitur, qui jam, quae possident, misericorditer tribuunt, ut a coelesti Domino dispensatores se positos subditorum temporalium agnoscant, et tanto humiliter praebeant, quanto et aliena esse intelligunt, quae dispensant. Cumque in illorum ministerio, quibus accepta largiuntur, constitutos se esse considerant, nequaquam eorum mentes

* 1 Tim. iv, 1, 3. † Rom. xiv, 21. ‡ 1 Tim. v, 23.

tumor sublevet, sed timor premat. Unde et necesse est, ut sollicite perpendant, ne commissa indigne distribuant; ne quaedam, quibus nulla, ne nulla, quibus quaedam, ne multa, quibus pauca, ne pauca praebeant, quibus impendere multa debuerunt; ne praecipitatione hoc, quod tribuunt, inutiliter spargant; ne tarditate petentes noxie crucient; ne recipiendae hic gratiae intentio subrepat; ne dationis lumen laudis transitoriae appetitio exstinguat; ne oblatum munus conjuncta tristitia obsideat; ne in bene oblato munere animus plus, quam decet, hilarescat; ne sibi quidquam, cum totum recte impleverint, tribuant, et simul omnia, postquam peregerint, perdant. Ne enim sibi virtutem suae liberalitatis deputent, audiant, quod scriptum est: "Siquis administrat, tamquam ex virtute, quam administrat Deus."* Ne in benefactis immoderatius gaudeant, audiant, quod scriptum est: "Cum feceritis omnia, quae praecepta sunt vobis, dicite: Servi inutiles sumus; quod debuimus facere, fecimus." † Ne largitatem tristitia corrumpat, audiant, quod scriptum est: "Hilarem enim datorem diligit Deus." ‡ Ne ex impenso munere transitoriam laudem quaerant, audiant, quod scriptum est: "Nesciat sinistra tua, quid faciat dextera tua." § Id est, piae dispensationi nequaquam se gloria vitae praesentis admisceat, sed opus rectitudinis appetitio ignoret favoris. Ne impensae gratiae vicissitudinem requirant, audiant, quod scriptum est: "Cum facis prandium aut coenam, noli vocare amicos tuos, neque fratres tuos, neque cognatos, neque vicinos divites; ne forte et ipsi te reinvitent, et fiat tibi retributio: sed cum facis convivium, voca pauperes, debiles, claudos, caecos; et beatus eris, quia non habent,

* 1 Pet. iv, 11. † Luc. xvii, 10. ‡ 2 Cor. ix, 7. § Matt. vi, 3.

unde retribuere tibi." * Ne quae praebenda sunt citius, sero praebeantur, audiant, quod scriptum est: "Ne dicas amico tuo: Vade et revertere, et cras dabo tibi, cum statim possis dare." † Ne sub obtentu largitatis ea, quae possident, inutiliter spargant, audiant, quod scriptum est: "Sudet eleemosyna in manu tua." Ne cum multa necesse sint, pauca largiantur, audiant, quod scriptum est: "Qui parce seminat, parce et metet." ‡ Ne, cum pauca oportet, plurima praebeant, et ipsi postmodum minime inopiam tolerantes ad impatientiam erumpant, audiant, quod scriptum est: "Non ut aliis sit remissio, vobis autem tribulatio, sed ex aequalitate, vestra abundantia illorum inopiam suppleat, et ut illorum abundantia vestrae inopiae sit supplementum." § Cum enim dantis mens ferre inopiam nescit, si multa sibi subtrahit, occasionem contra se impatientiae exquirit. Prius namque praeparandus est patientiae animus, et tunc aut multa sunt aut cuncta largienda: ne dum minus aequanimiter inopia irruens fertur, et praemissa largitatis merces pereat, et adhuc mentem deterius murmuratio subsequens perdat. Ne omnino nihil eis praebeant, quibus conferre aliquid parvum debent, audiant, quod scriptum est: "Omni petenti te tribue." ‖ Ne saltem aliquid praebeant, quibus omnino conferre nil debent, audiant, quod scriptum est: "Da bono, et non receperis peccatorem: benefac humili, et non dederis impio." ¶ Et rursum: "Panem tuum et vinum super sepulturam justi constitue, et noli ex eo manducare et bibere cum peccatoribus." ** Panem enim suum et vinum peccatoribus praebet, qui iniquis subsidia pro eo, quod iniqui sunt, impendit. Unde et nonnulli

* Luc. xiv, 12. † Prov. iii, 28. ‡ 2 Cor. ix, 6.
§ 2 Cor. viii, 13. ‖ Luc. vi, 30. ¶ Eccli xii, 4.
** Tob. iv, 18.

hujus mundi divites, cum fame crucientur Christi pauperes, effusis largitatibus nutriunt histriones. Qui vero indigenti etiam peccatori panem suum, non quia peccator, sed quia homo est, tribuit, nimirum non peccatorem, sed justum pauperem nutrit, quia in illo non culpam, sed naturam diligit.

Admonendi sunt etiam, qui jam sua misericorditer largiuntur, ut sollicite custodire studeant, ne cum commissa peccata eleemosynis redimunt, adhuc redimenda committant: ne venalem Dei justitiam aestiment, si cum curant pro peccatis nummos tribuere, arbitrentur se posse inulte peccare. "Plus est namque anima quam esca, et corpus quam vestimentum." * Qui ergo escam aut vestimentum pauperibus largitur, sed tamen animae vel corporis iniquitate polluitur, quod minus est justitiae obtulit, et quod majus est, culpae: sua enim Deo dedit, et se diabolo.

At contra admonendi sunt, qui adhuc et aliena rapere contendunt, ut sollicite audiant, quid veniens in judicium Dominus dicat. Ait namque: "Esurivi, et non dedistis mihi manducare; sitivi, et non dedistis mihi bibere; hospes eram, et non collegistis me; nudus, et non operuistis me; infirmus et in carcere, et non visitastis me." Quibus etiam praemittit, dicens: "Discedite a me maledicti in ignem aeternum, qui paratus est diabolo et angelis ejus." † Ecce nequaquam audiunt, quia rapinas vel quaelibet alia violenta commiserunt, et tamen aeternis gehennae ignibus mancipantur. Hinc ergo colligendum est, quanta damnatione plectendi sunt, qui rapiunt aliena, si tanta animadversione feriuntur, qui sua indiscrete tenuerunt. Perpendant, quo eos obligat reatu res capta, si tali subjicit poenae non tradita. Perpendant, quid mereatur injustitia

* Luc. xii, 23. † Matt. xxv, 41.

illata, si tanta percussione digna est pietas non impensa.

Cum aliena rapere intendunt, audiant, quod scriptum est: "Vae ei, qui multiplicat non sua: usquequo aggravat contra se densum lutum?"* Avaro quippe contra se densum lutum aggravare, est terrena lucra cum pondere peccati cumulare. Cum multiplicare large habitationis spatia cupiunt, audiant, quod scriptum est: "Vae, qui conjungitis domum ad domum, et agrum agro copulatis, usque ad terminum loci. Numquid habitabitis soli vos in medio terrae?" † Ac si aperte diceret: Quousque vos extenditis, qui habere in communi mundo consortes minime potestis? Conjunctos quidem premitis, sed contra quos valeatis vos extendere, semper invenitis. Cum augendis pecuniis inhiant, audiant, quod scriptum est: "Avarus non impletur pecunia, et qui amat divitias, non capiet fructus ex eis." ‡ Fructus quippe ex illis caperet, si eas bene spargere non amando voluisset. Qui vero eas diligendo retinet, hic utique sine fructu derelinquet. Cum repleri cunctis simul opibus inardescunt, audiant, quod scriptum est: "Qui festinat ditari, non erit innocens": § profecto enim, qui augere opes ambit, vitare peccatum negligit, et more avium captus, cum escam terrarum rerum avidus conspicit, quo stranguletur peccati laqueo, non agnoscit. Cum quaelibet praesentis mundi lucra desiderant, et ea, quae de futuro damna patientur, ignorant, audiant, quod scriptum est: "Hereditas, ad quam festinatur in principio, in novissimo benedictione carebit." ‖ Ex hac quippe vita initium ducimus, ut ad benedictionis sortem in novissimo veniamus: qui itaque in principio hereditari festinant, sortem sibi in novissimo bene-

* Hab. ii, 6. † Isa. v, 8. ‡ Eccli v, 9.
§ Prov. xxviii, 20. ‖ Prov. xx, 21.

dictionis amputant; quia dum per avaritiae nequitiam hic multiplicari appetunt, illic ab aeterno patrimonio exheredes fiunt. Cum vel plurima ambiunt, vel obtinere cuncta, quae ambierint, possunt, audiant, quod scriptum est: "Quid prodest homini, si totum mundum lucretur, animae vero suae detrimentum faciat?"* Ac si aperte Veritas dicat: Quid prodest homini, si totum, quod extra se est, congregat, si hoc ipsum solum, quod ipse est, damnat? Plerumque autem citius raptorum avaritia corrigitur, si in verbis admonentis, quam fugitiva sit praesens vita, monstretur: si eorum ad medium memoria deducatur, qui et ditari in hoc mundo diu conati sunt, et tamen in adeptis divitiis diu manere nequiverunt: quibus festina mors repente et simul abstulit, quidquid eorum nequitia nec simul nec repente congregavit; qui non solum hic rapta reliquerunt, sed secum ad judicium causas rapinae detulerunt. Horum itaque exempla audiant, quos in verbis suis procul dubio et ipsi condemnant, ut, cum post verba ad cor redeunt, imitari saltem, quos judicant, erubescant.

CAPUT XXI

Quomodo admonendi, qui aliena non appetunt, sed sua retinent, et qui sua tribuentes aliena tamen rapiunt

ALITER admonendi sunt, qui nec aliena appetunt, nec sua largiuntur; atque aliter, qui et ea, quae habent, tribuunt, et tamen aliena rapere non desistunt. Admonendi sunt, qui nec aliena appetunt, nec sua largiuntur, ut sciant sollicite, quod ea, de qua sumpti sunt, cunctis

* Matt. xvi, 26.

hominibus terra communis est, et idcirco alimenta quoque omnibus communiter profert. Incassum ergo se innocentes putant, qui commune Dei munus sibi privatum vindicant: qui cum accepta non tribuunt, in proximorum nece grassantur; quia tot pene quotidie perimunt, quot morientium pauperum apud se subsidia abscondunt. Nam cum quaelibet necessaria indigentibus ministramus, sua illis reddimus, non nostra largimur; justitiae debitum potius solvimus, quam misericordiae opera implemus. Unde et ipsa Veritas, cum de misericordia caute exhibenda loqueretur ait: "Attendite, ne justitiam vestram faciatis coram hominibus."* Cui quoque sententiae etiam psalmista concinens dicit: "Dispersit, dedit pauperibus, justitia ejus manet in aeternum."† Cum enim largitatem impensam pauperibus praemisisset, non hanc vocare misericordiam, sed justitiam maluit; quia quod a communi Domino tribuitur, justum profecto est, ut quicunque accipiunt, eo communiter utantur. Hinc etiam Salomon ait: "Qui justus est, tribuet et non cessabit." ‡ Admonendi sunt quoque, ut sollicite attendant, quod ficulnea, quae fructum non habuit, contra hanc districtus agricola queritur, quod etiam terram occupavit. Terram quippe ficulnea sine fructu occupat, quando mens tenacium hoc, quod prodesse multis poterat, inutiliter servat. Terram ficulnea sine fructu occupat, quando locum, quem exercere alius per solem boni operis valuit, stultus per desidiae umbram premit.

Hi autem nonnunquam dicere solent: Concessis utimur, aliena non quaerimus, et si digna misericordiae retributione non agimus, nulla tamen perversa perpetramus. Quod idcirco sentiunt, quia videlicet aurem cordis a verbis coelestibus

* Matt. vi, 1. † Ps. cxi, 9. ‡ Prov. xxi, 26

claudunt. Neque enim dives in Evangelio, qui induebatur purpura et bysso, qui epulabatur quotidie splendide, aliena rapuisse, sed infructuose propriis usus fuisse perhibetur, eumque post hanc vitam ultrix gehenna suscepit, non quia aliquid illicitum gessit, sed quia immoderato usu totum se licitis tradidit.*

Admonendi sunt tenaces, ut noverint, quod hanc primam injuriam faciunt Deo, quia danti sibi omnia nullam misericordiae hostiam reddunt. Hinc etiam psalmista ait: "Non dabit Deo propitiationem suam nec pretium redemptionis animae suae."† Pretium namque redemptionis dare, est opus bonum praevenienti nos gratiae reddere. Hinc Joannes exclamat dicens: "Jam securis ad radicem arboris posita est. Omnis arbor, quae non facit fructum bonum, excidetur, et in ignem mittetur." ‡ Qui ergo se innoxios, quia aliena non rapiunt, aestimant, ictum securis vicinae praevideant, et torporem improvidae securitatis amittant, ne cum ferre fructum boni operis negligunt, a praesenti vita funditus quasi a viriditate radices exsecentur.

At contra admonendi sunt, qui et ea, quae habent, tribuunt, et aliena rapere non desistunt, ne valde munifici videri appetant, et de boni specie deteriores fiant. Hi etenim propria indiscrete tribuentes non solum, ut supra jam diximus, ad impatientiae murmurationem proruunt, sed cogente se inopia usque ad avaritiam devolvuntur. Quid ergo eorum mente infelicius, quibus de largitate nascitur avaritia, et peccatorum seges quasi ex virtute seminatur? Prius itaque admonendi sunt, ut tenere sua rationabiliter sciant, et tunc demum, ut aliena non ambiant. Si enim radix culpae in ipsa effusione non exuritur, nunquam per ramos exuberans

* Luc. xvi, 19 ss. † Ps. xlviii, 8 ‡ Luc. iii, 9.

avaritiae spina siccatur. Occasio ergo rapiendi subtrahitur, si bene prius jus possidendi disponatur. Tunc vero admoniti audiant, quomodo, quae habent misericorditer tribuant, quando nimirum didicerunt, ut bona misericordiae per interjectam rapinae nequitiam non confundant. Violenter enim exquirunt, quae misericorditer largiuntur. Sed aliud est pro peccatis misericordiam facere, aliud pro misericordia facienda peccare; quae jam nequaquam misericordia nuncupari potest, quia ad dulcem fructum non proficit, quae per virus pestiferae radicis amarescit. Hinc est enim, quod ipsa etiam sacrificia per prophetam Dominus reprobat dicens: "Ego Dominus diligens judicium, et odio habens rapinam in holocausto." * Hinc iterum dixit: "Hostiae impiorum abominabiles, quae offeruntur ex scelere." † Qui saepe quoque et indigentibus subtrahunt, quae Deo largiuntur. Sed quanta eos animadversione renuat, per quendam sapientem Dominus demonstrat dicens: "Qui offert sacrificium de substantia pauperis, quasi qui victimat filium in conspectu patris sui." ‡ Quid namque esse intolerabilius potest, quam mors filii ante oculos patris? Hoc itaque sacrificium quanta ira aspiciatur, ostenditur, quod orbati patris dolori comparatur. Et tamen plerumque, quanta tribuunt, pensant: quanta autem rapiunt, considerare dissimulant. Quasi mercedem numerant, et perpendere culpas recusant. Audiant itaque, quod scriptum est: "Qui mercedes congregavit, misit eas in sacculum pertusum." § In sacculo quippe pertuso videtur, quando pecunia mittitur; sed quando amittitur, non videtur. Qui ergo, quanta largiuntur, aspiciunt, sed, quantum rapiunt, non perpendunt, in pertuso sacculo mercedes mittunt,

* Isa. lxi, 8. † Prov. xxi, 27. ‡ Eccli xxxiv, 24.
§ Agg. i, 6.

quia profecto has in spem suae fiduciae intuentes congerunt, sed non intuentes perdunt.

CAPUT XXII

Quomodo admonendi sunt discordes et pacati

ALITER admonendi sunt discordes, atque aliter pacati. Discordes namque admonendi sunt, ut certissime sciant, quia quantislibet virtutibus polleant, spiritales fieri nullatenus possunt, si uniri per concordiam proximis negligunt. Scriptum quippe est: "Fructus autem spiritus est caritas, gaudium, pax."* Qui ergo servare pacem non curat, ferre fructum spiritus recusat. Hinc Paulus ait: "Cum sit inter vos zelus et contentio, nonne carnales estis?"† Hinc iterum quoque dicit: "Pacem sequimini cum omnibus, et sanctimoniam, sine qua nemo videbit Deum."‡ Hinc rursum admonens ait: "Solliciti servare unitatem spiritus in vinculo pacis: unum corpus et unus spiritus, sicut vocati estis in una spe vocationis vestrae."§ Ad unam ergo vocationis spem nequaquam pertingitur, si non ad eam unita cum proximis mente curratur. At saepe nonnulli, quo quaedam specialiter dona percipiunt, eo superbiendo donum concordiae, quod majus est, amittunt; ut, si fortasse carnem prae caeteris gulae refrenatione quis edomat, concordare eis, quos superat abstinendo, contemnat. Sed qui abstinentiam a concordia separat, quid admoneat psalmista, perpendat; ait enim: "Laudate eum in tympano et choro."‖ In tympano namque sicca et percussa pellis resonat; in choro autem voces societate concordant. Quisquis ita-

* Gal. v, 22. † 1 Cor. iii, 3. ‡ Heb. xii, 14.
§ Eph. iv, 3. ‖ Ps. cl, 4.

que corpus affligit, at concordiam deserit, Deum quidem laudat in tympano, sed non laudat in choro. Saepe vero dum quosdam major scientia erigit, a ceterorum societate disjungit, et quasi, quo plus sapiunt, eo a concordiae virtute desipiscunt. Hi itaque audiant, quid per semetipsam Veritas dicat: "Habete sal in vobis, et pacem habete inter vos."* Sal quippe sine pace non virtutis est donum, sed damnationis argumentum. Quo enim quisque melius sapit, eo concordiam deserens deterius delinquit, et idcirco inexcusabiliter merebitur supplicium, quia prudenter, si voluisset, potuit vitare peccatum. Quibus recte quoque per Jacobum dicitur: "Quod si zelum amarum habetis, et contentiones sunt in corde vestro, nolite gloriari, et mendaces esse adversum veritatem. Non est ista sapientia desursum descendens, sed terrena, animalis, diabolica. Quae autem desursum est sapientia, primum quidem pudica est, deinde pacifica."† Pudica videlicet, quia caste intelligit; pacifica autem, quia per elationem se minime a proximorum societate disjungit. Admonendi sunt dissidentes, ut noverint, quod tamdiu nullum boni operis Deo sacrificium immolant, quamdiu a proximorum caritate discordant. Scriptum namque est: "Si offers munus tuum ad altare, et ibi recordatus fueris, quia frater tuus habet aliquid adversum te, relinque ibi munus tuum ante altare, et vade prius reconciliari fratri tuo, et tunc veniens offeres munus tuum."‡ Ex qua scilicet praeceptione pensandum est, quorum hostia repellitur, quam intolerabilis culpa monstratur. Nam cum mala cuncta bonis sequentibus diluantur, pensemus, quanta sint mala discordiae, quae nisi extincta

* Marc. ix, 49. † Marc. iii, 14. ‡ Matt. v, 23.

funditus fuerit, bonum subsequi non permittunt. Admonendi sunt discordes, ut si aures a mandatis coelestibus declinant, mentis oculos ad considerandа ea, quae in infimis versantur, aperiant: quod saepe aves unius ejusdemque generis sese socialiter volando non deserunt, et quod gregatim animalia bruta pascuntur. Quia si solerter aspicimus, concordando sibi irrationalis natura indicat, quantum malum per discordiam rationalis natura committat, quando haec a rationis intentione perdidit, quod illa motu naturali custodiat.

At contra admonendi sunt pacati, ne dum plus quam necesse est, pacem, quam possident, amant, ad perpetuam pervenire non appetant. Plerumque enim gravius intentionem mentium rerum tranquillitas tentat, ut, quo non sunt molesta, quae tenent, eo minus amabilia fiant, quae vocant, et quo delectant praesentia, eo non inquirantur aeterna. Unde et per semetipsam Veritas loquens, cum terrenam pacem a superna distingueret, atque ad venturam discipulos ex praesenti provocaret, ait: "Pacem relinquo vobis, pacem meam do vobis." * Relinquo scilicet transitoriam, do mansuram. Si ergo in ea cor, quae relicta est, figitur, nunquam ad illam, quae danda est, pervenitur. Pax igitur praesens ita tenenda est, ut et diligi debeat et contemni, ne, si immoderate diligitur, diligentis animus in culpa capiatur. Unde et admonendi sunt pacati, ne, dum nimis humanam pacem desiderant, pravos hominum mores nequaquam redarguant, et consentiendo perversis ab auctoris sui se pace disjungant, ne, dum humana foras jurgia metuunt, interni foederis discissione feriantur. Quid est enim pax transitoria, nisi quoddam vestigium

* Joan. xiv, 27.

pacis aeternae? Quid ergo esse dementius potest, quam vestigia in pulvere impressa diligere, sed ipsum, a quo impressa sunt, non amare? Hinc David, dum totum se ad foedera pacis internae constringeret, testatur, quod cum malis concordiam non teneret, dicens: "Nonne qui te oderunt, Deus, oderam illos, et super inimicos tuos tabescebam? Perfecto odio oderam illos: inimici facti sunt mihi." * Inimicos etenim Dei perfecto odio odisse, est et quod facti sunt diligere, et quod faciunt increpare: mores pravorum premere, vitae prodesse.

Pensandum ergo est, quando ab increpatione quiescitur, quanta culpa cum pessimis pax tenetur; si propheta tantus hoc velut in hostiam Deo obtulit, quod contra se pro Domino pravorum inimicitias excitavit. Hinc est, quod tribus Levi assumptis gladiis per castrorum media transiens, quia feriendis noluit peccatoribus parcere, Deo manus dicta est consecrasse. † Hinc Phinees peccantium civium gratiam spernens coëuntes cum Madianitis perculit, et iram Domini iratus placavit. ‡ Hinc per semetipsam Veritas dicit: "Nolite arbitrari, quia venerim pacem mittere in terram. Non veni pacem mittere, sed gladium." § Malorum namque cum incaute amicitiis jungimur, culpis ligamur. Unde Josaphat, qui tot de anteacta vita praeconiis attollitur, de Achab regis amicitiis pene periturus increpatur. Cui a Domino per prophetam dicitur: "Impio praebes auxilium, et his, qui oderunt Dominum, amicitia jungeris, et idcirco iram quidem Domini merebaris, sed bona opera inventa sunt in te, eo quod abstuleris lucos de terra Juda." ‖ Ab illo enim, qui summe rectus est, eo ipso jam discre-

* Ps. cxxxviii, 21. † Exod. xxxii, 27. ‡ Num. xxv, 9.
§ Matt. x, 34. ‖ 2 Par. xix, 2.

pat, quo perversorum amicitiis vita nostra concordat. Admonendi sunt pacati, ne, si ad correptionis verba prosiliant, temporalem pacem sibi perturbare formident. Rursumque admonendi sunt, ut eandem pacem dilectione integra intrinsecus teneant, quam per invectionem vocis sibi extrinsecus turbant. Quod utrumque provide se David servasse perhibet, cum dicit: "Cum his, qui oderunt pacem, eram pacificus: cum loquebar illis, impugnabant me gratis." * Ecce et loquens impugnabatur, et tamen impugnatus erat pacificus; quia nec insanientes cessabat reprehendere, nec reprehensos negligebat amare. Hinc etiam Paulus ait: "Si fieri potest, quod ex vobis est, cum omnibus hominibus pacem habentes." † Hortaturus enim discipulos, ut pacem cum omnibus haberent, praemisit dicens: "Si fieri potest," atque subjunxit: "Quod ex vobis est." Difficile quippe erat, ut, si male acta corriperent, habere pacem cum omnibus possent. Sed cum temporalis pax in pravorum cordibus ex nostra increpatione confunditur, inviolata, necesse est, ut in nostro corde servetur. Recte itaque ait: "Quod ex vobis est." Ac si nimirum dicat: Quia pax ex duarum partium consensu subsistit, si ab eis, qui corripiuntur, expellitur, integra tamen in vestra, qui corripitis, mente teneatur. Unde idem rursum discipulos admonet dicens: "Si quis non obedit verbo nostro per epistolam, hunc notate, et non commisceamini cum illo, ut confundatur." ‡ Atque illico adjunxit: "Et nolite ut inimicum existimare illum, sed corripite ut fratrem." Ac si diceret: Pacem cum eo exteriorem solvite, sed interiorem circa illum medullitus custodite, ut peccantis mentem sic vestra discordia feriat, quatenus pax a cordibus vestris nec abnegata discedat.

* Ps. cxix, 7. † Rom. xii, 18. ‡ 2 Thess. iii, 14.

CAPUT XXIII

Quomodo admonendi, qui jurgia serunt, et pacifici

ALITER admonendi sunt seminantes jurgia, atque aliter pacifici. Admonendi namque sunt, qui jurgia seminant, ut, cujus sint sequaces, agnoscant. De apostata quippe angelo scriptum est, cum bonae messi inserta fuissent zizania: "Inimicus homo hoc fecit." * De cujus etiam membro per Salomonem dicitur: "Homo apostata, vir inutilis: graditur ore perverso, annuit oculis, terit pede, digito loquitur, pravo corde machinatur malum, et omni tempore jurgia seminat." † Ecce, quem seminantem jurgia dicere voluit, prius apostatam nominavit; quia nisi more superbientis angeli a conspectu Conditoris prius intus aversione mentis caderet, foras postmodum usque ad seminanda jurgia non veniret. Qui recte describitur, quod annuit oculis, digito loquitur, terit pede. Interior namque est custodia, quae ordinata servat exterius membra. Qui ergo statum mentis perdidit, subsequenter foras in inconstantiam motionis fluit, atque exteriori mobilitate indicat, quod nulla interius radice subsistat. Audiant jurgiorum seminatores, quod scriptum est: "Beati pacifici, quoniam filii Dei vocabuntur." ‡ Atque e diverso colligunt, quia si filii Dei vocantur, qui pacem faciunt, procul dubio satanae sunt filii, qui confundunt. Omnes autem, qui per discordiam separantur a viriditate dilectionis, arefiunt. Qui etsi boni operis fructus in suis actionibus proferunt, profecto nulli sunt, quia non ex unitate caritatis oriuntur. Hinc

* Matt. xiii, 28. † Prov. vi, 12. ‡ Matt. v, 9.

ergo perpendant seminantes jurgia, quam multipliciter peccant: qui dum unam nequitiam perpetrant, ab humanis cordibus cunctas simul virtutes eradicant. In uno enim malo innumera peragunt; quia seminando discordiam caritatem, quae nimirum virtutum omnium mater est, extinguunt. Quia autem nihil pretiosius est Deo virtute dilectionis, nil est desiderabilius diabolo extinctione caritatis. Quisquis ergo seminando jurgia dilectionem proximorum perimit, hosti Dei familiarius servit: quia qua ille amissa cecidit, hanc iste vulneratis cordibus subtrahens eis iter ascensionis abscidit.

At contra admonendi sunt pacifici, ne tantae actionis pondus levigent, si inter quos fundare pacem debeant, ignorent. Nam sicut multum nocet, si unitas desit bonis, ita valde est noxium, si non desit malis. Si ergo perversorum nequitia in pace jungitur, profecto eorum malis actibus robur augetur quia quo sibi in malitia congruunt, eo se robustius bonorum afflictionibus illidunt. Hinc namque est, quod contra damnati illius vasis, videlicet antichristi, praedicatores divina voce beato Job dicitur: "Membra carnium ejus cohaerentia sibi." * Hinc sub squamarum specie de ejus satellitibus perhibetur: "Una uni conjungitur, et ne spiraculum quidem incedit per eas." † Sequaces quippe illius, quo nulla inter se discordiae adversitate divisi sunt, eo in bonorum gravius nece glomerantur. Qui ergo iniquos pace sociat, iniquitati vires administrat, quia bonos deterius deprimunt, quos et unanimiter persequuntur. Unde praedicator egregius gravi pharisaeorum sadducaeorumque persecutione deprehensus inter semetipsos dividere studuit, quos contra se graviter unitos vidit, cum clamavit

* Job xli, 14. † Job xli, 7.

dicens: "Viri fratres, ego pharisaeus sum, filius pharisaeorum, de spe et resurrectione mortuorum ego judicor."* Dumque sadducaei spem resurrectionemque mortuorum esse denegarent, quam pharisaei juxta sacri eloquii praecepta crederent, facta in persecutorum unanimitate dissensio est, et divisa turba illaesus Paulus exivit, quae hunc unita prius immaniter pressit. Admonendi itaque sunt, qui faciendae pacis studiis occupantur, ut pravorum mentibus prius amorem debeant internae pacis infundere, quatenus eis postmodum valeat exterior pax prodesse: ut, dum eorum cor in illius cognitione suspenditur, nequaquam ad nequitiam ex hujus perceptione rapiatur: dumque supernam provident, terrenam nullo modo ad usum suae deteriorationis inclinent. Cum vero perversi quique tales sunt, ut nocere bonis nequeant, etiamsi concupiscant, inter hos nimirum debet terrena pax construi, et priusquam ab eis valeat superna cognosci: ut hi scilicet, quos contra dilectionem Dei malitia suae impietatis exasperat, saltem ex proximi amore mansuescant, et quasi e vicino ad melius transeant, ut ad illam, quae a se longe est, pacem Conditoris ascendant.

CAPUT XXIV

Quomodo admonendi rudes in doctrina sacra, et docti, sed non humiles

ALITER admonendi sunt, qui sacrae Legis verba non recte intelligunt, atque aliter, qui recte quidem intelligunt, sed haec humiliter non loquuntur. Admonendi enim sunt, qui sacrae Legis verba non recte intelligunt, ut perpendant, quia saluberrimum vini potum in veneni sibi

* Act. xxiii, 6.

poculum vertunt, ac per medicinale ferrum vulnere mortali se feriunt, dum per hoc in se sana perimunt, per quod salubriter abscindere sauciata debuerunt. Admonendi sunt, ut perpendant, quod Scriptura sacra in nocte vitae praesentis quasi quaedam nobis lucerna sit posita, cujus nimirum verba, dum non recte intelligunt, de lumine tenebrescunt, quos videlicet ad intellectum pravum intentio perversa non raperet, nisi prius superbia inflaret. Dum enim se prae ceteris sapientes arbitrantur, sequi alios ad melius intellecta despiciunt; atque ut apud imperitum vulgus scientiae sibi nomen extorqueant, student summopere et ab aliis recte intellecta destruere, et sua perversa roborare. Unde bene per prophetam dicitur: "Secuerunt praegnantes Galaad ad dilatandum terminum suum."* Galaad namque acervus testimonii interpretatur. Et quia cuncta simul congregatio Ecclesiae per confessionem servit testimonio veritatis, non incongrue per Galaad Ecclesia exprimitur, quae ore cunctorum fidelium de Deo, quaeque vera sunt, testatur. Praegnantes autem vocantur animae, quae intellectum verbi ex divino amore concipiunt, si ad perfectum tempus veniant, conceptam intelligentiam operis ostensione pariturae. Terminum vero suum dilatare, est opinionis suae nomen extendere. Secuerunt ergo praegnantes Galaad ad dilatandum terminum suum; quia nimirum haeretici mentes fidelium, quae jam aliquid de veritatis intellectu conceperant, perversa praedicatione perimunt, et scientiae sibi nomen extendunt. Parvulorum corda jam de verbi conceptione gravida erroris gladio scindunt, et quasi doctrinae sibi opinionem faciunt. Hos ergo cum conamur instruere, ne perversa sentiant,

* Amos i, 13.

admoneamus prius necesse est, ne inanem gloriam quaerant. Si enim radix elationis abscinditur, consequenter rami pravae assertionis arefiunt. Admonendi sunt etiam, ne errores discordiasque generando legem Dei, quae idcirco data est, ut sacrificia satanae prohibeat, eandem ipsam in satanae sacrificium vertant. Unde per prophetam Dominus queritur dicens: "Dedi eis frumentum, vinum, et oleum, et argentum multiplicavi eis et aurum, quae fecerunt Baal."* Frumentum quippe a Domino accipimus, quando in dictis obscurioribus subducto tegmine literae per medullam spiritus Legis interna sentimus. Vinum suum Dominus nobis praestat, cum Scripturae suae alta praedicatione nos inebriat. Oleum quoque suum nobis tribuit, cum praeceptis apertioribus vitam nostram blanda lenitate disponit. Argentum multiplicat, cum nobis luce veritatis plena eloquia subministrat. Auro quoque nos ditat, quando cor nostrum intellectu summi fulgoris irradiat. Quae cuncta haeretici Baal offerunt, quia apud auditorum suorum corda corrupte omnia intelligendo pervertunt. Et de frumento Dei, vino atque oleo, argento pariter et auro, satanae sacrificium immolant, quia ad errorem discordiae verba pacis inclinant. Unde admonendi sunt, ut perpendant, quia dum perversa mente de praeceptis pacis discordiam faciunt, justo Dei examine ipsi de verbis vitae moriuntur.

At contra admonendi sunt, qui recte quidem verba Legis intelligunt, sed haec humiliter non loquuntur; ut in divinis sermonibus, prius quam aliis eos proferant, semetipsos requirant, ne insequentes aliorum facta se deserant, et cum recte cuncta de sacra Scriptura sentiunt, hoc solum, quod per illam contra elatos dicitur, non atten-

* Osee ii, 8.

dant. Improbus quippe et imperitus est medicus, qui alienum mederi appetit, et ipse vulnus, quod patitur, nescit. Qui igitur verba Dei humiliter non loquuntur, profecto admonendi sunt, ut cum medicamina aegris apponunt, prius virus suae pestis inspiciant, ne alios medendo ipsi moriantur. Admoneri debent, ut considerent, ne a virtute dicti dicendi qualitate discordent, ne loquendo aliud, et ostendendo aliud praedicent. Audiant itaque, quod scriptum est: "Si quis loquitur, quasi sermones Dei."* Qui ergo verba, quae proferunt, ex propriis non habent, cur quasi de propriis tument? Audiant, quod scriptum est: "Sicut ex Deo coram Deo in Christo loquimur."† Ex Deo enim coram Deo loquitur, qui praedicationis verbum et, quia a Deo accepit, intelligit, et placere per illud Deo non hominibus quaerit. Audiant, quod scriptum est: "Abominatio Domini est omnis arrogans."‡ Quia videlicet, dum in verbo Dei gloriam propriam quaerit, jus dantis invadit, eumque laudi suae postponere nequaquam metuit, a quo hoc ipsum, quod laudatur, accepit. Audiant, quod praedicatori per Salomonem dicitur: "Bibe aquam de cisterna tua, et fluenta putei tui. Deriventur fontes tui foras, et in plateis aquas divide. Habeto eas solus, nec sint alieni participes tui."§ Aquam quippe praedicator de cisterna sua bibit, cum ad cor suum rediens prius audit ipse, quod dicit. Bibit sui fluenta putei, si sui irrigatione verbi infunditur. Ubi bene subjungitur: "Deriventur fontes tui foras, et in plateis aquas divide."‖ Rectum quippe est, ut ipse prius bibat, et tunc praedicando aliis influat. Fontes namque foras derivare, est exterius aliis vim praedicationis infun-

* 1 Pet. iv, 11. † 2 Cor. ii, 17. ‡ Prov. xvi, 5.
§ Prov. v, 15 s. ‖ Prov. v, 16.

dere. In plateis autem aquas dividere, est in magna auditorum amplitudine juxta uniuscujusque qualitatem divina eloquia dispensare. Et quia plerumque inanis gloriae appetitus subrepit, dum sermo Dei ad multorum notitiam currit, postquam dictum est: "In plateis aquas divide," recte subjungitur: "Habeto eas solus, nec sint alieni participes tui." Alienos quippe malignos spiritus vocat, de quibus per prophetam tentati hominis voce dicitur: "Alieni insurrexerunt in me, et fortes quaesierunt animam meam."* Ait ergo: Aquas et in plateis divide, et tamen solus habe. Ac si apertius dicat: Si necesse et, ut praedicationi exterius servias, quatenus per elationem te immundis spiritibus non conjungas, ne in divini verbi ministerio hostes tuos ad te participes admittas. Aquas ergo et in plateis dividimus, et tamen soli possidemus, quando et exterius late praedicationem fundimus, et tamen per eam humanas laudes assequi minime ambimus.

CAPUT XXV

Quomodo admonendi, qui officium praedicationis nimia humilitate detrectant, et qui praecipiti festinatione occupant

ALITER admonendi sunt, qui cum praedicare digne valeant, prae nimia humilitate formidant; atque aliter admonendi sunt, quos a praedicatione imperfectio vel aetas prohibet, et tamen praecipitatio impellit. Admonendi namque sunt, qui cum praedicare utiliter possunt, immoderata tamen humilitate refugiunt, ut ex minori consideratione colligant, quantum in majoribus rebus delinquant. Si enim indigentibus proximis ipsi,

* Ps. liii, 5.

quas haberent, pecunias absconderent, adjutores procul dubio calamitatis exstitissent. Quo ergo reatu constringantur, aspiciant, qui dum peccantibus fratribus verbum praedicationis subtrahunt, morientibus mentibus vitae remedia abscondunt. Unde et bene quidam sapiens dicit: "Sapientia abscondita et thesaurus invisus, quae utilitas in utrisque?"* Si populos fames attereret, et occulta frumenta ipsi servarent, auctores procul dubio mortis existerent. Qua itaque plectendi sunt poena, considerent, qui cum fame verbi animae pereant, ipsi panem perceptae gratiae non ministrant. Unde et bene per Salomonem dicitur: "Qui abscondit frumenta, maledicetur in populis."† Frumenta quippe abscondere, est praedicationis sanctae apud se verba retinere. In populis autem talis quisque maledicitur; quia in solius culpa silentii pro multorum, quos corrigere potuit, poena damnatur. Si medicinalis artis minime ignari secandum vulnus cernerent, et tamen secare recusarent, profecto peccatum fraternae mortis ex solo torpore committerent. Quanta ergo culpa involvantur aspiciant, qui dum cognoscunt vulnera mentium, curare ea negligunt sectione verborum. Unde et bene per prophetam dicitur: "Maledictus, qui prohibet gladium suum a sanguine."‡ Gladium quippe a sanguine prohibere, est praedicationis verbum a carnalis vitae interfectione retinere. De quo rursum gladio dicitur: "Et gladius meus manducabit carnes."§

Hi itaque, cum apud se sermonem praedicationis occultant, divinas contra se sententias terribiliter audiant, quatenus ab eorum cordibus timorem timor expellat. Audiant, quod talen-

* Eccli xx, 32. † Prov. xi, 26. ‡ Jer. xlviii, 10.
§ Deut. xxxii, 42.

tum, qui erogare noluit, cum sententia damnationis amisit.* Audiant, quod Paulus eo se a proximorum sanguine mundum credidit, quo feriendis eorum vitiis non pepercit dicens: "Contestor vos hodierna die, quia mundus sum a sanguine omnium: non enim subterfugi, quo minus annuntiarem omne consilium Dei vobis." † Audiant, quod voce angelica Joannes admonetur, cum dicitur: "Qui audit, dicat: Veni." ‡ Ut nimirum cui se vox interna insinuat, illuc etiam clamando alios, quo ipse rapitur, trahat; ne clausas fores etiam vocatus inveniat, si vocanti vacuus appropinquat. Audiant, quod Isaias, quia a verbi ministerio tacuit, illustratus superno lumine, magna voce poenitentiae se ipse reprehendit, dicens: "Vae mihi, quia tacui." § Audiant, quod per Salomonem in illum praedicationis scientia multiplicari promittitur, qui in hoc, quod jam obtinuit, torporis vitio non tenetur. Ait namque: "Anima, quae benedicit, impinguabitur, et qui inebriat, ipse quoque inebriabitur." ‖ Qui enim exterius praedicando benedicit, interioris augmenti pinguedinem recipit, et dum vino eloquii auditorum mentem inebriare non desinit, potu multiplicati muneris inebriatus excrescit. Audiant, quod David hoc Deo in munere obtulit, quod praedicationis gratiam, quam acceperat, non abscondit dicens: "Ecce labia mea non prohibebo, Domine, tu cognovisti; justitiam tuam non abscondi in corde meo: veritatem tuam et salutare tuum dixi." ¶ Audiant, quod sponsi colloquio ad sponsam dicitur: "Quae habitas in hortis, amici auscultant: fac me audire vocem tuam." ** Ecclesia quippe in hortis habitat, quae

* Matt. xxv, 24 s. †Act. xx, 26. ‡ Apoc. xxii, 17.
§ vi, 5. ‖Prov. xi, 25. ¶ Ps. xxxix 10.
** Cant. viii 13.

ad viriditatem intimam exculta plantaria virtutum servat. Cujus vocem amicos auscultare, est electos quosque verbum praedicationis illius desiderare; quam videlicet vocem sponsus audire desiderat, quia ad praedicationem ejus per electorum suorum animas anhelat. Audiant, quod Moyses, cum irascentem Deum populo cerneret, et assumi ad ulciscendum gladio juberet; illos a parte Dei denunciavit exsistere, qui delinquentium scelera incunctanter ferirent dicens: "Si quis Domini est, jungatur mihi: ponat vir gladium super femur suum: ite et redite de porta usque ad portam per medium castrorum, et occidat unusquisque fratrem, et amicum, et proximum suum."* Gladium quippe super femur ponere, est praedicationis studium voluptatibus carnis anteferre: et cum sancta quis studet dicere, curet necesse est, illicitas suggestiones edomare. De porta vero usque ad portam ire, est a vitio usque ad vitium, per quod ad mentem mors ingreditur, increpando discurrere. Per medium vero castrorum transire, est tanta aequalitate intra Ecclesiam vivere, ut qui delinquentium culpas redarguit, in nullius se debeat favorem declinare. Unde et recte subjungitur: "Occidat vir fratrem, et amicum, et proximum suum." Fratrem scilicet et amicum et proximum interficit, qui cum punienda invenit, ab increpationis gladio nec eis, quos per cognationem diligit, parcit. Si ergo ille Dei dicitur, qui ad ferienda vitia zelo divini amoris excitatur; profecto esse se Dei denegat, qui in quantum sufficit, increpare vitam carnalium recusat.

At contra admonendi sunt quos a praedicationis officio vel imperfectio vel aetas prohibet, et tamen praecipitatio impellit, ne dum tanti sibi

* Exod. xxxii, 27.

onus officii praecipitatione arrogant, viam sibi subsequentis meliorationis abscidant, et cum arripiunt intempestive, quod non valent, perdant etiam, quod implere quandoque tempestive potuissent: atque scientiam, qui incongrue conantur ostendere, juste ostendantur amisisse. Admonendi sunt, ut considerent, quod pulli avium, si ante pennarum perfectionem volare appetant, unde ire in alta cupiunt, inde in ima merguntur. Admonendi sunt, ut considerent, quod structuris recentibus necdum solidatis, si lignorum pondus superponitur, non habitaculum, sed ruina fabricatur. Admonendi sunt, ut considerent, quod conceptas soboles feminae, si priusquam plene formentur, proferunt, nequaquam domos, sed tumulos replent. Hinc est enim, quod ipsa Veritas, quae repente, quos vellet, roborare potuisset; ut exemplum sequentibus daret, ne imperfecti praedicare praesumerent, postquam plene discipulos de virtute praedicationis instruxit, illico adjunxit: "Vos autem sedete in civitate quoadusque induamini virtute ex alto."* In civitate quippe consedemus, si intra mentium nostrarum nos claustra constringimus, ne loquendo exterius evagemur; ut, cum virtute divina perfecte induimur, tunc quasi a nobismetipsis foras etiam alios instruentes exeamus. Hinc per quendam sapientem dicitur: "Adolescens loquere in causa tua vix, et si bis interrogatus fueris, habeat initium responsio tua."† Hinc est, quod idem Redemptor noster, cum in coelis sit conditor, et ostensione suae potentiae semper doctor angelorum, ante tricennale tempus in terra magister noluit fieri hominum; ut videlicet praecipitatis vim saluberrimi timoris infunderet, cum ipse etiam, qui labi non posset, perfectae vitae gratiam non nisi perfecta

* Luc. xxiv, 49. † Eccli xxxii, 10.

aetate praedicaret. Scriptum quippe est: "Cum factus esset annorum duodecim, remansit puer Jesus in Jerusalem."* De quo a parentibus requisito, paulo post subditur: "Invenerunt illum in templo sedentem in medio doctorum audientem illos et interrogantem." Vigilanti itaque consideratione pensandum est, quod, cum Jesus annorum duodecim dicitur in medio doctorum sedens, non docens, sed interrogans, invenitur. Quo exemplo scilicet ostenditur, ne infirmus docere quis audeat, si ille puer doceri interrogando voluit, qui per divinitatis potentiam verbum scientiae ipsis suis doctoribus ministravit. Cum vero per Paulum discipulo dicitur: "Praecipe haec et doce: nemo adolescentiam tuam contemnat,"† sciendum nobis est, quia in sacro eloquio aliquando adolescentia juventus vocatur. Quod citius ostenditur, si Salomonis ad medium verba proferantur, qui ait: "Laetare juvenis in adolescentia tua."‡ Si enim utraque unum esse non decerneret, quem monebat in adolescentia, juvenem non vocaret.

CAPUT XXVI

Quomodo admonendi, quibus omnia ex sententia succedunt, et quibus nulla

ALITER admonendi sunt, qui in hoc, quod temporaliter appetunt, prosperantur; atque aliter, qui ea quidem, quae mundi sunt, concupiscunt, sed tamen adversitatis labore fatigantur. Admonendi namque sunt, qui in hoc, quod temporaliter appetunt, prosperantur, ne cum cuncta ad votum suppetunt, dantem quaerere negligant: sed in his, quae dantur, animum figant, ne pere-

* Luc. ii, 42. † 1 Tim. iv, 12. ‡ Eccles. xi, 9.

grinationem pro patria diligant, ne subsidia itineris in obstaculo perventionis vertant, ne nocturno lunae lumine delectati claritatem solis videre refugiant. Admonendi itaque sunt, ut quae in hoc mundo consequuntur, calamitatis solatia, non autem praemia retributionis credant: sed contra favores mundi mentem erigant, ne in eis ex tota cordis delectatione succumbant. Quisquis enim prosperitatem, qua utitur, apud judicium cordis melioris vitae amore non reprimit, favorem vitae transeuntis in mortis perpetuae occasionem vertit. Hinc est enim, quod sub Idumaeorum specie, qui vincendos se prosperitati suae reliquerunt, in hujus mundi successibus laetantes increpantur, cum dicitur: "Dederunt terram meam sibi in hereditatem cum gaudio, et toto corde, et ex animo."* Quibus verbis perpenditur, quod non solum, quia gaudeant, sed quod toto corde et ex animo gaudeant, districta reprehensione feriantur. Hinc Salomon ait: "Aversio parvulorum interficiet eos, et prosperitas stultorum perdet illos."† Hinc Paulus admonet dicens: "Emunt, tamquam non possidentes, et qui utuntur hoc mundo, tamquam non utantur."‡ Ut videlicet sic nobis, quae suppetunt, exterius serviant, quatenus a supernae delectationis studio animum non inflectant; ne luctum nobis internae peregrinationis temperent ea, quae in exsilio positis subsidium praebent, et quasi felices in transitoriis non gaudeamus, qui ab aeternis nos interim miseros cernimus. Hinc namque est, quod electorum voce dicit Ecclesia: "Laeva ejus sub capite meo, et dextera illius amplexabitur me."§ Sinistram Dei, prosperitatem videlicet vitae praesentis, quasi sub capite

* Ezec. xxxvi, 5. † Prov. i, 32. ‡ 1 Cor. vii, 30. § Cant. ii, 6.

posuit quam intentione summi amoris premit. Dextera vero Dei eam amplectitur, quia sub aeterna ejus beatitudine tota devotione continetur. Hinc rursum per Salomonem dicitur: "Longitudo dierum in dextera ejus, in sinistra vero illius divitiae et gloria."* Divitiae itaque et gloria, qualiter sint habenda, docuit, quae posita in sinistra memoravit. Hinc psalmista ait: "Salvum me fac dextera tua."† Neque enim ait manu, sed dextera, ut videlicet, cum dexteram diceret, quia aeternam salutem quaereret, indicaret. Hinc rursum scriptum est: "Dextera manus tua Domine confregit inimicos."‡ Hostes enim Dei, etsi in sinistra ejus proficiunt, dextera franguntur: quia plerumque pravos vita praesens elevat, sed adventus aeternae beatitudinis damnat.

Admonendi sunt, qui in hoc mundo prosperantur, ut solerter considerent, quia praesentis vitae prosperitas aliquando idcirco datur, ut ad meliorem vitam provocet, aliquando vero, ut in aeternum plenius damnet. Hinc est enim, quod plebi Israëliticae Chanaan terra promittitur, ut quandoque ad aeterna speranda provocetur. Neque enim rudis ille populus promissionibus Dei in longinquum crederet, si a Promissore suo non etiam e vicino aliquid percepisset. Ut ergo ad aeternorum fidem certius roboretur, nequaquam solummodo spe ad res, sed rebus quoque ad spem trahitur. Quod liquido psalmista testatur dicens: "Dedit eis regiones gentium, et labores populorum possederunt: ut custodiant justificatione ejus, et legem ejus requirant."§ Sed cum largientem Deum humana mens boni operis responsione non sequitur, unde nutrita pie creditur, inde

* Prov. iii, 16. † Ps. cvii, 7. ‡ Exod. xv, 6.
§ Ps. civ, 44.

justius damnatur. Hinc enim per psalmistam rursum dicitur: "Dejecisti eos, dum allevarentur." * Quia videlicet reprobi, cum recta opera divinis muneribus non rependunt, cum totos se hic deserunt, et affluentibus prosperitatibus dimittunt, unde exterius proficiunt, inde ab intimis cadunt. Hinc est, quod in inferno cruciato diviti dicitur: "Recepisti bona in vita tua." † Idcirco enim bona hic recepit et malus, ut illic plenius mala reciperet, quia hic fuerat nec per bona conversus.

At contra admonendi sunt, qui ea quidem, quae mundi sunt, concupiscunt, sed tamen, adversitatis labore fatigantur, ut sollicita consideratione perpendant, Creator dispositorque cunctorum quanta super eos gratia vigilat, quos in sua desideria non relaxat. Aegro quippe, quem medicus desperat, concedit, ut cuncta, quae concupiscit, accipiat. Nam qui sanari posse creditur, a multis, quae appetit, prohibetur, et pueris nummos subtrahimus, quibus tota simul patrimonia heredibus reservamus. Hinc ergo de spe aeternae hereditatis gaudium sumant, quos adversitas vitae temporalis humiliat; quia nisi salvandos in perpetuum cerneret, erudiendos sub disciplinae regimine divina dispensatio non frenaret. Admonendi itaque sunt, qui in his, quae temporaliter concupiscunt, adversitatis labore fatigantur, ut sollicite considerent, quod plerumque etiam justos, cum temporalis potentia sustollit, velut in laqueo culpa comprehendit. Nam sicut in priori hujus voluminis parte jam diximus.‡ David Deo amabilis rectior fuit in servitio, quam cum pervenit ad regnum.§ Servus namque amore justitiae deprehensum adversarium ferire timuit: rex au-

* Ps. lxxii, 18. † Luc. xvi, 25. ‡ Parte 1, c. iii.
§ 1 Reg. xxiv, 18.

em persuasione luxuriae devotum militem etiamt sub studio fraudis extinxit.* Quis ergo opes, quis potestatem, quis gloriam quaerat innoxie, si et illi exstiterunt noxia, qui haec habuit non quaesita? Quis inter haec sine magni discriminis labore salvabitur, si ille in his culpa interveniente turbatus est, qui ad haec fuerat Deo eligente praeparatus? Admonendi sunt, ut considerent, quia Salomon, qui post tantam sapientiam usque ad idololatriam cecidisse describitur, nihil in hoc mundo, priusquam caderet, adversitatis habuisse memoratur, sed concessa sapientia funditus cor deseruit, quod nulla vel minima tribulationis disciplina custodivit.†

CAPUT XXVII

Quomodo admonendi conjugati, et caelibes

ALITER admonendi sunt conjugiis obligati; atque aliter a conjugii nexibus liberi. Admonendi namque sunt conjugiis obligati, ut cum vicissim, quae sunt alterius, cogitant, sic eorum quisque placere studeat conjugi, ut non displiceat Conditori; sic ea, quae hujus mundi sunt, agant, ut tamen appetere, quae Dei sunt, non omittant; sic de bonis praesentibus gaudeant, ut tamen sollicita intentione mala aeterna pertimescant; sic de malis temporalibus lugeant, ut tamen consolatione integra spem in bonis perennibus figant; quatenus, dum in transitu cognoscunt esse, quod agunt, in mansione, quod appetunt, nec mala mundi cor frangant, cum spes bonorum coelestium roborat; nec bona praesentis vitae decipiant, cum suspecta subsequentis judicii mala contristant. Itaque animus christianorum conju-

* 2 Reg. xi, 17. † 3 Reg. xi, 4.

gum et infirmus et fidelis, qui et plene cuncta temporalia despicere non valet, et tamen aeternis se conjungere per desiderium volet; quamvis in delectatione carnis interim jaceat, supernae spei refectione convalescat. Et si habet, quae mundi sunt in usu itineris, speret, quae Dei sunt in fructu perventionis: nec totum se ad hoc, quod agit, conferat, ne ab eo, quod robuste sperare debuit, funditus cadat. Quod bene ac breviter Paulus exprimit dicens: "Qui habent uxores, tamquam non habentes sint, et qui flent, tamquam non flentes, et qui gaudent, tamquam non gaudentes."* Uxorem quippe quasi non habendo habet, qui sic per illam carnali consolatione utitur, ut tamen nunquam ad prava opera a melioris intentionis rectitudine ejus amore flectatur. Uxorem quasi non habendo habet, qui transitoria esse cuncta conspiciens, curam carnis ex necessitate tolerat, sed aeterna gaudia spiritus ex desiderio exspectat. Non flendo autem flere, est sic exteriora adversa plangere, ut tamen noverit aeternae spei consolatione gaudere. Et rursum, non gaudendo gaudere, est sic de infimis animum attollere, ut tamen nunquam desinat summa formidare. Ubi apte quoque paulo post subdit: "Praeterit enim figura hujus mundi."† Ac si aperte diceret: Nolite constanter mundum diligere, quando et ipse non potest, quem diligitis, stare. Incassum cor quasi manentes figitis, dum fugit ipse, quem amatis.

Admonendi sunt conjuges, ut ea, in quibus sibi aliquando displicent, et patientes invicem tolerent, et exhortantes invicem salvent. Scriptum namque est: "Invicem onera vestra portate, et sic adimplebitis legem Christi."‡ Lex quippe Christi caritas est: quia ex illo nobis et largiter

* 1 Cor. vii, 29. † 1 Cor. vii, 31. ‡ Gal. vi, 2.

sua bona contulit, et aequanimiter mala nostra portavit. Tunc ergo legem Christi imitando complemus, quando et nostra bona benigne conferimus, et nostrorum mala pie sustinemus. Admonendi quoque sunt, ut eorum quisque non tam, quae ab altero tolerat, quam quae ab ipso tolerantur, attendat. Si enim sua, quae portantur, considerat, ea, quae ab altero sustinet, levius portat.

Admonendi sunt conjuges, ut suscipiendae prolis se meminerint causa conjunctos, et cum immoderatae admixtioni servientes propagationis articulum in usum transferunt voluptatis, perpendant, quod licet extra non exeant, in ipso tamen conjugio conjugii jura transcendunt. Unde necesse est, ut crebris exorationibus deleant, quod pulchram copulae speciem admixtis voluptatibus foedant. Hinc est enim, quod peritus medicinae coelestis Apostolus non tam sanos instituit, quam infirmis medicamenta monstravit, dicens: "De quibus scripsistis mihi: Bonum est homini mulierem non tangere: propter fornicationem autem unusquisque suam habeat uxorem, et unaquaeque suum virum habeat." * Qui enim fornicationis metum praemisit, profecto non stantibus praeceptum contulit; sed ne fortasse in terram ruerent, lectum cadentibus ostendit. Unde adhuc infirmantibus subdidit: "Uxori vir debitum reddat, similiter et uxor viro." Quibus dum in magna honestate conjugii aliquid de voluptate largiretur, adjunxit: "Hoc autem dico secundum indulgentiam, non secundum imperium." Culpa quippe esse innuitur, quod indulgeri perhibetur; sed quae tanto citius relaxetur, quanto non per hanc illicitum quid agitur, sed hoc, quod est licitum, sub moderamine non tenetur. Quod bene

* 1 Cor. vii, 1.

Loth in semetipso exprimit, qui ardentem Sodomam fugit;* sed tamen Segor inveniens nequaquam mox montana conscendit. Ardentem quippe Sodomam fugere, est illicita carnis incendia declinare. Altitudo vero montium est munditia continentium. Vel certe quasi in monte sunt, qui etiam carnali copulae inhaerent, sed tamen extra suscipiendae prolis admixtionem debitam nulla carnis voluptate solvuntur. In monte quippe stare est, nisi fructum propaginis in carne non quaerere. In monte stare, est carni carnaliter non adhaerere. Sed quia multi sunt, qui scelera quidem carnis deserunt, nec tamen in conjugio positi usus solummodo debiti jura conservant, exiit quidem Loth Sodomam, sed tamen mox ad montana non pervenit, quia jam damnabilis vita relinquitur, sed adhuc celsitudo conjugalis continentiae subtiliter non tenetur. Est vero in medio Segor civitas, quae fugientem salvet infirmum: quia videlicet, cum sibi per incontinentiam miscentur conjuges, et lapsus scelerum fugiunt, et tamen venia salvantur. Quasi parvam quippe in civitatem veniunt, in qua ab ignibus defendantur: quia conjugalis haec vita non quidem in virtutibus mira est, sed tamen a suppliciis secura. Unde idem Loth ad angelum dicit: "Est civitas hic juxta, ad quam possum fugere, parva, et salvabor in ea. Numquid non modica est, et vivet anima mea in ea?† Juxta ergo dicitur, et tamen ad salutem tuta perhibetur; quia conjugalis vita nec a mundo longe divisa est, nec tamen a gaudio salutis aliena. Sed tunc in hac actione vitam suam conjuges quasi in parva civitate custodiunt, quando pro se assiduis deprecationibus intercedunt. Unde et recte per angelum ad eundem Loth dicitur:

* Gen. xix, 30. † Gen. xix, 20.

"Ecce etiam in hoc suscepi preces tuas, ut non subvertam urbem, pro qua locutus es." * Quia videlicet, cum deprecatio funditur Deo, nequaquam talis conjugii vita damnatur. De qua deprecatione Paulus quoque admonet dicens: "Nolite fraudare invicem, nisi forte ex consensu ad tempus, ut vacetis orationi." †

At contra admonendi sunt, qui ligati conjugiis non sunt, ut praeceptis coelestibus eo rectius serviant, quo eos ad curas mundi nequaquam jugum copulae carnalis inclinat: ut quos onus licitum conjugii non gravat, nequaquam pondus illicitum terrenae sollicitudinis premat; sed tanto eos paratiores dies ultimus, quanto et expeditiores inveniat; ne quo meliora agere vacantes possunt, sed tamen negligunt, eo supplicia deteriora mereantur. Audiant, quod Apostolus, cum quosdam ad caelibatus gratiam instrueret, non conjugium sprevit, sed curas mundi nascentes ex conjugio repulit dicens: "Hoc ad utilitatem vestram dico, non ut laqueum vobis injiciam: sed ad id, quod honestum est, et quod facultatem praebeat sine impedimento Domino observiendi." ‡ Ex conjugiis quippe terrenae sollicitudines prodeunt, et idcirco magister gentium auditores suos ad meliora persuasit, ne sollicitudine terrena ligarentur. Quem igitur caelibem curarum secularium impedimentum praepedit, et conjugio se nequaquam subdidit, et tamen conjugii onera non evasit. Admonendi sunt caelibes, ne sine damnationis judicio misceri se feminis vacantibus putent. Cum enim Paulus fornicationis vitium tot criminibus exsecrandis inseruit, cujus sit reatus indicavit dicens: "Neque fornicatores, neque idolis servientes, neque adulteri, neque molles, neque masculorum concubitores, neque fures,

* Gen. xix, 21. † 1 Cor. vii, 5. ‡ 1 Cor. vii, 35.

neque avari, neque ebriosi, neque maledici, neque rapaces regnum Dei possidebunt."* Et rursum: "Fornicatores autem et adulteros judicabit Deus."† Admonendi itaque sunt, ut si tentationum procellas cum difficultate salutis tolerant, conjugii portum petant. Scriptum namque est: "Melius est nubere, quam uri."‡ Sine culpa scilicet ad conjugium veniunt, si tamen necdum meliora voverunt. Nam quisquis bonum majus subire proposuit, bonum minus, quod licuit, illicitum fecit. Scriptum quippe est: "Nemo mittens manum suam ad aratrum, et respiciens retro, aptus est regno coelorum."§ Qui igitur fortiori studio intenderat, retro convincitur respicere, si relictis amplioribus bonis ad minima retorquetur.

CAPUT XXVIII

Quomodo admonendi peccata carnis experti, et eorum experies

ALITER admonendi sunt peccatorum carnis conscii, atque aliter ignari. Admonendi namque sunt peccata carnis experti, ut mare saltem post naufragium metuant, et perditionis suae discrimina vel cognita perhorrescant; ne qui pie post perpetrata mala servati sunt, haec improbe repetendo moriantur. Unde peccanti animae et numquam a peccato desinenti dicitur: "Frons mulieris meretricis facta est tibi, noluisti erubescere."‖ Admonendi itaque sunt, ut studeant, quatenus, si accepta naturae bona integra servare noluerunt, saltem scissa resarciant. Quibus nimirum necesse est, ut perpendant, in tam magno fidelium numero quam multi et se illibatos custo-

* 1 Cor. vi, 9. † Heb. xiii, 4. ‡ 1 Cor. vii, 9.
§ Luc. ix, 62. ‖ Jer. iii, 3.

diant, et alios ab errore convertant. Quid ergo isti dicturi sunt, si aliis in integritate stantibus ipsi nec post damna resipiscunt? Quid dicturi sunt, si cum multi et alios secum deferunt ad regnum, hi exspectanti Domino nec semetipsos reducant? Admonendi sunt, ut praeterita commissa considerent, et imminentia devitent. Unde sub Judaeae specie per prophetam Dominus corruptis in hoc mundo mentibus transactas ad memoriam culpas revocat, quatenus pollui in futuris erubescant dicens: "Fornicatae sunt in Aegypto, in adolescentia sua fornicatae sunt: ibi subacta sunt ubera earum, et fractae sunt mammae pubertatis earum."* In Aegypto quippe ubera subiguntur, cum turpi hujus mundi desiderio humanae mentis voluntas substernitur. In Aegypto pubertatis mammae franguntur, quando naturales sensus adhuc in semetipsis integri pulsantis concupiscentiae corruptione vitiantur.

Admonendi sunt peccata carnis experti, ut vigilanti cura conspiciant, post delicta nobis ad se redeuntibus Deus quanta benevolentia sinum suae pietatis expandat, cum per prophetam dicat: "Si dimiserit vir uxorem suam, et illa recedens duxerit virum alium, numquid revertetur ad eam ultra? Numquid non polluta et contaminata erit mulier illa? Tu autem fornicata es cum amatoribus multis, tamen revertere ad me, dicit Dominus."† Ecce, de fornicante et relicta muliere argumentum justitiae proponitur, et tamen nobis post lapsum redeuntibus non justitia, sed pietas exhibetur. Ut hinc utique colligamus, si nobis delinquentibus tanta pietate parcitur, a nobis nec post delictum redeuntibus quanta improbitate peccatur? Aut quae ab illo erit super improbos venia, qui non cessat vocare post culpam? Quae

* Ezec. xxiii, 3. † Jer. iii, 1.

nimirum bene per prophetam post delictum misericordia vocationis exprimitur, cum averso homini dicitur: "Et erunt oculi tui videntes praeceptorem tuum, et aures tuae audient verbum post tergum monentis."* Humanum quippe genus Dominus in faciem monuit, quando in paradiso condito homini atque in libero arbitrio stanti, quid facere, quidve non facere deberet, indixit. Sed homo in Dei faciem terga dedit, cum superbiens ejus jussa contempsit. Nec tamen superbientem Deus deseruit, qui ad revocandum hominem Legem dedit, exhortantes angelos misit, in carne nostrae mortalitatis ipse apparuit. Ergo post tergum stans nos admonuit, qui ad recuperationem nos gratiae etiam contemptus vocavit. Quod igitur generaliter simul potuit dici de cunctis, hoc necesse est specialiter sentiri de singulis. Quasi enim coram Deo positus quisque verba monitionis ejus percipit, cum priusquam peccata perpetret, voluntatis ejus praecepta cognoscit. Adhuc enim ante faciem ejus stare, est necdum eum peccando contemnere. Cum vero derelicto bono innocentiae iniquitatem eligens appetit, jam terga in ejus faciem mittit. Sed ecce, adhuc et post tergum Deus subsequens monet, qui etiam post culpam ad se redire persuadet. Aversum revocat, commissa non respicit, revertenti sinum pietatis expandit. Vocem ergo post tergum monentis audimus, si ad invitantem nos Dominum saltem post peccata revertimur. Debemus igitur pietatem vocantis erubescere, si justitiam nolumus formidare; quia tanto graviori improbitate contemnitur, quanto et contemptus adhuc vocare non dedignatur.

At contra admonendi sunt peccata carnis

* Isa. xxx, 20.

ignorantes, ut tanto sollicitius praecipitem ruinam metuant, quanto altius stant. Admonendi sunt, ut noverint, quia, quo magis loco prominenti consistunt, eo crebrioribus sagittis insidiatoris impetuntur. Qui tanto ardentius solet erigi, quanto robustius se conspicit vinci: tantoque intolerabilius dedignatur vinci, quanto contra se videt per integra infirmae carnis castra pugnari. Admonendi sunt, ut incessanter praemia suscipiant, et libenter procul dubio tentationum, quas tolerant, labores calcabunt. Si enim attendatur felicitas, quae sine transitu attingitur, leve fit, quod transeundo laboratur. Audiant, quod per prophetam dicitur: "Haec dicit Dominus eunuchis: Qui custodierint sabbata mea, et elegerint, quae volui, et foedus meum tenuerint: dabo eis in domo mea et in muris meis locum, et nomen melius a filiis et filiabus."* Eunuchi quippe sunt, qui compressis motibus carnis affectum in se pravi operis abscidunt. Quo autem apud Patrem loco habeantur, ostenditur: quia in domo Patris videlicet aeterna mansione etiam filiis praeferuntur. Audiant, quod per Joannem dicitur: "Hi sunt, qui cum mulieribus non sunt coinquinati: virgines enim sunt, et sequuntur Agnum, quocunque ierit."† Et quod canticum cantant, quod nemo potest dicere, nisi illa centum quadraginta quatuor millia. Singulariter quippe canticum Agno cantare, est cum eo in perpetuum prae cunctis fidelibus etiam de incorruptione carnis gaudere. Quod tamen electi ceteri canticum audire possunt, licet dicere nequeant; quia per caritatem quidem in illorum celsitudine laeti sunt, quamvis ad eorum praemia non assurgant. Audiant peccatorum carnis ignari, quod per semetipsam de hac integritate Veritas dicit: "Non

* Isa. lvi, 4. † Apoc. xiv, 4.

omnes capiunt verbum hoc."* Quod eo innotuit summum, quo denegavit omnium; et dum praedicit, quia difficile capitur, audientibus innuit, captum cum qua cautela teneatur.

Admonendi sunt itaque peccata carnis ignorantes, ut et praeeminere virginitatem conjugio sciant, et tamen se super conjuges non extollant, quatenus dum et virginitatem praeferunt, et se postponunt, et illud non deserunt, quod melius esse aestimant, et se custodiant, quo se inaniter non exultant. Admonendi sunt, ut considerent, quod plerumque actione secularium vita continentium confunditur, cum et illi ultra habitum assumunt opera, et isti juxta ordinem proprium non existant corda. Unde bene per prophetam dicitur: "Erubesce Sidon, ait mare."† Quasi enim per vocem maris ad verecundiam Sidon adducitur, quando per comparationem vitae secularium atque in hoc mundo fluctuantium ejus, qui munitus et quasi stabilis cernitur, vita reprobatur. Saepe enim nonnulli ad Dominum post carnis peccata redeuntes tanto se ardentius in bonis operibus exhibent, quanto damnabiliores se de malis vident. Et saepe quidam in carnis integritate perdurantes, cum minus se respiciunt habere, quod defleant, plene sibi sufficere vitae suae innocentiam putant, atque ad fervorem spiritus nullis se ardoris stimulis inflammant. Et fit plerumque Deo gratior amore ardens vita post culpam, quam securitate torpens innocentia. Unde et voce judicis dicitur: "Remittuntur ei peccata multa, quia dilexit multum."‡ Et: "Gaudium erit in coelo super uno peccatore poenitente, magis quam super nonaginta novem justis, quibus non opus est poenitentia."§ Quod

* Matt. xix, 11. † Isa. xxiii, 4. ‡ Luc. vii, 47.
§ Luc. xv, 10.

citius ex ipso usu colligimus, si nostrae mentis judicia pensemus. Plus namque terram diligimus, quae post spinas exarata fructus uberes producit, quam quae nullas spinas habuit, sed tamen exculta sterilem segetem gignit. Admonendi sunt peccata carnis ignorantes, ne superioris ordinis celsitudine se ceteris praeferant, cum ab inferioribus quanta se melius agantur, ignorant. In examine namque recti judicis mutat merita ordinum qualitas actionum. Quis enim consideratis ipsis rerum imaginibus nesciat, quod in natura gemmarum carbunculus praeferatur hyacintho? Sed tamen coerulei coloris hyacinthus praefertus pallenti carbunculo: quia et illi, quod naturae ordo subtrahit, species decoris adjungit, et hunc, quem naturalis ordo praetulerat, coloris qualitas foedat. Sic ergo in humano genere et quidam in meliori ordine deteriores sunt, et quidam in deteriori meliores; quia et isti sortem extremi habitus bene vivendo transcendunt, et illi superioris loci meritum moribus non exsequendo diminuunt.

CAPUT XXIX

Quomodo admonendi, qui peccata operum lugent, et qui solum cogitationum

ALITER admonendi sunt, qui peccata deplorant operum, atque aliter, qui cogitationum. Admonendi quippe sunt, qui peccata deplorant operum, ut consummata mala perfecta diluant lamenta, ne plus adstringantur in debito perpetrati operis, et minus solvant fletibus satisfactionis. Scriptum quippe est: "Potum dedit nobis in lacrymis in mensura": * ut videlicet uniuscujusque

* Ps. lxxix, 6.

mens tantum poenitendo compunctionis suae bibat lacrymas, quantum se a Deo meminet aruisse per culpas. Admonendi sunt, ut incessanter admissa ante oculos reducant, atque vivendo agant, ut a districto judice videri non debeant. Unde David cum peteret dicens: "Averte oculos tuos a peccatis meis"; * paulo superius intulit: "Delictum meum coram me est semper." † Ac si diceret: Peccatum meum ne respicias postulo, quia hoc respicere ipse non cesso. Unde et per prophetam Dominus dicit: "Et peccatorum tuorum memor non ero, tu autem memor esto." ‡ Admonendi sunt, ut singula quaeque admissa considerent, et dum per unumquodque erroris sui inquinationem deflent, simul se ac totos lacrymis mundent. Unde bene per Jeremiam dicitur, cum Judaeae singula delicta pensarentur: "Divisiones aquarum deduxit oculus meus." § Divisas quippe ex oculis aquas deducimus, quando peccatis singulis dispertitas lacrymas damus. Neque enim uno eodemque tempore atque mens de omnibus dolet; sed dum nunc hujus, nunc illius culpae memoria acrius tangitur, simul de omnibus in singulis commota purgatur.

Admonendi sunt, ut de misericordia, quam postulant, praesumant, ne vi immoderatae afflictionis intereant. Neque enim pie Dominus ante delinquentium oculos flenda peccata poneret, si per semetipsum ea districte ferire voluisset. Constat enim, quod a suo judicio abscondere voluit, quos miserando praeveniens sibimetipsis judices fecit. Hinc enim scriptum est: "Praeveniamus faciem Domini in confessione." ‖ Hinc per Paulum dicitur: "Si nosmetipsos dijudicaremus, non utique judicaremur." ¶ Rursumque

* Ps. l, 11. † l, 5. ‡ Isa. xliii, 25, sec. LXX.
§ Thren. iii, 48. ‖ Ps. xciv, 2. ¶ 1 Cor. xi, 31.

admonendi sunt, ut sic de spe fiduciam habeant, ne tamen incauta securitate torpescant. Plerumque enim hostis callidus mentem, quam peccato supplantat, cum de ruina sua afflictam respicit, securitatis pestiferae blanditiis seducit. Quod figurate exprimitur, cum factum Dinae memoratur. Scriptum quippe est: "Egressa est Dina, ut videret mulieres regionis illius: quam cum vidisset Sichem filius Hemor Hevaei, princeps terrae illius, adamavit eam, et rapuit, et dormivit cum illa, vi opprimens virginem; et conglutinata est anima ejus cum ea, tristemque blanditiis delinivit." * Dina quippe, ut mulieres videat extraneae regionis, egreditur, quando unaquaeque mens sua studia negligens, actiones alienas curans extra habitum atque extra ordinem proprium vagantur. Quam Sichem princeps terrae opprimit; quia videlicet inventam in curis exterioribus diabolus corrumpit. Et conglutinata est anima ejus cum ea; quia unitam sibi per iniquitatem respicit. Et quia, cum mens a culpa resipiscit, addicitur, atque admissum flere conatur: corruptor autem spes ac securitates vacuas ante oculos revocat, quatenus utilitatem tristitiae subtrahat; recte illic adjungitur: "Tristemque blanditiis delinivit." Modo enim aliorum facta graviora, modo nil esse, quod perpetratum est, modo misericordem Deum loquitur, modo adhuc tempus subsequens ad poenitentiam pollicetur; ut dum per haec decepta mens ducitur, ab intentione poenitentiae suspendatur: quatenus tunc bona nulla recipiat, quam nunc mala nulla contristant; et tunc plenius obruatur suppliciis, quae nunc etiam gaudet in delictis.

At contra admonendi sunt, qui peccata cogitationum deflent, ut sollicite considerent intra

* Gen. xxxiv, 1 s.

mentis arcana utrum delectatione tantummodo, an etiam consensu deliquerint. Plerumque enim tentatur cor, et ex carnis nequitia delectatur, et tamen eidem nequitiae ex ratione renititur, ut in secreto cogitationis et contristet, quod libet, et libeat, quod contristat. Nonnunquam vero ita mens baratro tentationis absorbetur, ut nullatenus renitatur, sed ex deliberatione sequitur hoc, unde ex delectatione pulsatur, et si facultas exterior suppetat, rerum mox effectibus interiora vota consummat. Quod videlicet si justa animadversio districti judicis respicit, non est jam cogitationis culpa, sed operis; quia, etsi rerum tarditas foras peccatum distulit, intus hoc consensionis opere voluntas implevit.

In primo autem parente didicimus, quia tribus modis omnis culpae nequitiam perpetramus, suggestione scilicet, delectatione, et consensu. Primum itaque per hostem, secundum vero per carnem, tertium per spiritum perpetratur. Insidiator enim prava suggerit, caro se delectationi subjicit, atque ad extremum spiritus victus delectatione consentit. Unde et ille serpens prava suggessit, Eva autem quasi caro se delectationi subdidit, Adam vero velut spiritus suggestione ac delectatione superatus assensit. Suggestione itaque peccatum agnoscimus, delectatione vincimur, consensu etiam ligamur. Admonendi sunt igitur, qui nequitias cogitationis deflent, ut sollicite considerent, in qua peccati mensura ceciderunt, quatenus juxta ruinae modum, quam in semetipsis introrsus sentiunt, etiam mensura lamentationis erigantur, ne, si cogitata mala minus cruciant, usque ad perpetranda opera perducant. Sed inter haec ita terrendi sunt, ut tamen minime frangantur. Saepe enim misericors Deus eo citius peccata cordis abluit, quo haec exire ad

opera non permittit, et cogitata nequitia quanto citius solvitur, quia effectu operis districtius non ligatur. Unde recte per psalmistam dicitur: "Dixi, pronuntiabo adversum me injustitias meas Domino, et tu remisisti impietatem cordis mei."* Qui enim impietatem cordis subdidit, quia cogitationum injustitias pronunciare vellet, indicavit. Dumque ait: "Dixi, pronunciabo," atque illico adjunxit: "Et tu remisisti"; quam sit super haec facilis venia, ostendit. Qui dum se adhuc petere promittit, hoc, quod petere se promittebat, obtinuit: quatenus, quia usque ad opus non venerat culpa, usque ad cruciatum non perveniret poenitentia; sed cogitata afflictio mentem tergeret, quam nimirum tantummodo cogitata iniquitas inquinasset.

CAPUT XXX

Quomodo admonendi, qui a peccatis, quae deflent, non abstinent, et qui, cum abstineant, non deflent

ALITER admonendi sunt, qui admissa plangunt, nec tamen deserunt; atque aliter qui deserunt, nec tamen plangunt. Admonendi sunt enim, qui admissa plangunt, nec tamen deserunt, ut considerare sollicite sciant, quia flendo inaniter se mundant, qui vivendo se nequiter inquinant, cum idcirco se lacrymis lavant, ut mundi ad sordes redeant. Hinc enim scriptum est: "Canis reversus ad suum vomitum, et sus lota in volutabro luti."† Canis quippe cum vomit, profecto cibum, qui pectus deprimebat, projicit; sed cum ad vomitum revertitur, unde levigatus fuerat, rursus oneratur. Et qui admissa plangunt, profecto nequitiam, de qua male satiati fuerant, et quae mentis intima deprimebat, confitendo projiciunt,

* Ps. xxxi, 5. † Prov. xxvi, 11; 2 Pet. ii, 22.

quam post confessionem, dum repetunt, resumunt. Sus vero in volutabro luti, cum lavatur, sordidior redditur. Et qui admissa plangit, nec tamen deserit, poenae gravioris culpae se subjicit; quia et ipsam, quam flendo potuit impetrare, veniam contemnit, et quasi in lutosa aqua semet-ipsum volvit, quia dum fletibus suis vitae munditiam subtrahit, ante Dei oculos sordidas ipsas etiam lacrymas facit. Hinc rursum scriptum est: "Ne iteres verbum in oratione tua." * Verbum namque in oratione iterare, est post fletum committere, quod rursum necesse sit flere. Hinc per Isaiam dicitur: "Lavamini, mundi estote." † Post lavacrum enim mundus esse negligit, quisquis post lacrymas vitae innocentiam non custodit. Et lavantur ergo, et nequaquam mundi sunt, qui commissa flere non desinunt, sed rursus flenda committunt. Hinc per quendam sapientem dicitur: "Qui baptizatur a mortuo, et iterum tangit illum, quid proficit lavatio ejus?" ‡ Baptizatur quippe a mortuo, qui mundatur fletibus a peccato: sed post baptisma mortuum tangit, qui culpam post lacrymas repetit.

Admonendi sunt, qui admissa plangunt, nec tamen deserunt, ut ante districti judicis oculos eis se esse similes agnoscant, qui venientes ad faciem quorundam hominum magna eis submissione blandiuntur; recedentes autem inimicitias ac damna, quae valent, atrociter inferunt. Quid est enim culpam flere, nisi humilitatem Deo suae devotionis ostendere? Et quid est post fletum prava agere, nisi superbas in eum, quem rogaverat, inimicitias exercere? Jacobo attestante, qui ait: "Quicunque voluerit amicus esse seculi hujus, inimicus Dei constituitur." § Admonendi

* Eccli vii, 15. † Isa. i, 16. ‡ Eccli xxxiv, 30.
§ Jac. iv, 4.

sunt, qui admissa plangunt, nec tamen deserunt. ut sollicite considerent, quia ita plerumque mali inutiliter compunguntur ad justitiam, sicut plerumque boni innoxie tentantur ad culpam. Fit quippe mira exigentibus meritis dispositionis internae mensura, ut et illi, dum de bono aliquid agunt, quod tamen non perficiunt, superbe inter ipsa, quae etiam plenissime perpetrant, mala confidant; et isti dum de malo tentantur, cui nequaquam consentiunt, quo per infirmitatem titubant, eo gressus cordis ad justitiam per humilitatem verius figant. Balaam quippe justorum tabernacula respiciens ait: "Moriatur anima mea morte justorum, et fiant novissima mea horum similia." * Sed cum compunctionis tempus abscessit, contra eorum vitam, quibus se similem fieri etiam moriendo poposcerat, consilium praebuit, et cum occasionem de avaritia reperit, illico oblitus est, quidquid sibi de innocentia optavit. Hinc vero doctor et praedicator gentium Paulus ait: "Video aliam legem in membris meis, repugnantem legi mentis meae, et captivum me ducentem in lege peccati, quae est in membris meis." † Qui profecto idcirco tentatur, ut in bono robustius ex ipsa infirmitatis suae cognitione solidetur. Quid est ergo, quod ille compungitur, et tamen justitiae non appropinquat; iste tentatur, et tamen eum culpa non inquinat; nisi hoc, quod aperte ostenditur, quod nec malos bona imperfecta adjuvant, nec bonos mala inconsummata condemnant?

At contra admonendi sunt, qui admissa deserunt, nec tamen plangunt; ne jam relaxatas aestiment culpas, quas, etsi agendo non multiplicant, nullis tamen fletibus mundant. Neque enim scriptor, si a scriptione cessaverit, quia alia non

* Num. xxiii, 10. † Rom. vii, 23.

addidit, etiam illa, quae scripserat, delevit: neque qui contumelias irrogat, si solummodo tacuerit, satisfecit, cum profecto necesse sit, ut verba praemissae superbiae verbis subjectae humilitatis impugnet: nec debitor absolutus est, quia alia non multiplicat, nisi et illa, quae ligaverat, solvat. Ita et cum Deo delinquimus, nequaquam satisfacimus, si ab iniquitate cessamus, nisi voluptates quoque, quas dileximus, e contrario appositis lamentis insequamur. Si enim nulla nos in hac vita operum culpa maculasset, nequaquam nobis hic adhuc degentibus ipsa ad securitatem innocentia nostra sufficeret; quia illicita animum multa pulsarent. Qua ergo mente securus est, qui perpetratis iniquitatibus ipse sibi testis est, quia innocens non est?

Neque enim Deus nostris cruciatibus pascitur, sed delictorum morbos medicamentis contrariis medetur: ut qui voluptatibus delectati discessimus, fletibus amaricati redeamus, et qui per illicita defluendo cecidimus, etiam a licitis nosmetipsos restringendo surgamus: et cor, quod insana laetitia infuderat, salubris tristitia exurat: et quod vulneraverat elatio superbiae, curet abjectio humilis vitae. Hinc enim scriptum est: "Dixi iniquis: Nolite inique agere: et delinquentibus: Nolite exaltare cornu." * Cornu quippe delinquentes exaltant, si nequaquam se ad poenitentiam ex cognitione suae iniquitatis humiliant. Hinc rursum dicitur: "Cor contritum et humiliatum Deus non spernit." † Quisquis enim peccata plangit, nec tamen deserit, cor quidem conterit, sed humiliare contemnit. Qui vero peccata jam deserit, nec tamen plangit, jam quidem humiliat, sed tamen cor conterere recusat. Hinc Paulus ait: "Et haec quidem fuistis; sed abluti estis, sed

* Ps. lxxiv, 5. † Ps. l, 19.

sanctificati estis."* Quia nimirum illos emendatior vita sanctificat, quos per poenitentiam abluens afflictio fletuum mundat. Hinc Petrus, cum quosdam territos malorum suorum consideratione conspiceret, admonuit dicens: "Poenitentiam agite, et baptizetur unusquisque vestrum."† Dicturus enim baptisma praemisit poenitentiae lamenta; ut prius se aqua suae afflictionis infunderent, et postmodum sacramento baptismatis lavarent. Qua igitur mente, qui transactas culpas flere negligunt, vivunt securi de venia, quando ipse summus pastor Ecclesiae huic etiam sacramento addendam poenitentiam credidit, quod peccata principaliter extinguit?

CAPUT XXXI

Quomodo admonendi, qui illicita, quorum sunt conscii, laudant, et qui condemnantes minime tamen cavent

ALITER admonendi sunt, qui illicita, quae faciunt, etiam laudant; atque aliter, qui accusant prava, nec tamen devitant. Admonendi sunt enim, qui illicita, quae faciunt, etiam laudant, ut considerent, quod plerumque plus ore quam opere delinquant. Opere namque per semetipsos solos prava perpetrant; ore autem per tot personas iniquitatem exhibent, quot audientium mentes iniqua laudantes docent. Admonendi ergo sunt, ut, si eradicare mala dissimulant, saltem seminare pertimescant. Admonendi sunt, ut eis perditio privata sufficiat. Rursumque admonendi sunt, ut, si mali esse non metuunt, erubescant saltem videri, quod sunt. Plerumque enim culpa, dum absconditur, effugatur: quia, dum mens erubescit videri, quod tamen

* 1 Cor. vi, 11. † Act. ii, 38.

esse non metuit, erubescit quandoque esse, quod fugit videri. Cum vero pravus quisque impudenter innotescit, quo liberius omne facinus perpetrat, eo etiam licitum putat, et quod licitum suspicatur, in hoc procul dubio multiplicius mergitur. Unde scriptum est: "Peccatum suum sicut Sodoma praedicaverunt, nec absconderunt." * Peccatum enim suum si Sodoma absconderet, adhuc sub timore peccaret. Sed funditus frena timoris amiserat, quae ad culpam nec tenebras inquirebat. Unde et rursum scriptum est: "Clamor Sodomorum et Gomorrhae multiplicatus est." † Peccatum quippe cum voce est culpa in actione, peccatum vero etiam cum clamore est culpa cum libertate.

At contra admonendi sunt, qui accusant prava, nec tamen devitant, ut provide perpendant, quid in districto Dei judicio pro sua excusatione dicturi sunt, qui de reatu suorum criminum etiam semetipsis judicibus non excusantur. Hi itaque quid aliud quam praecones sunt sui? Voces contra culpas proferunt, et semetipsos operibus reos trahunt. Admonendi sunt, ut videant, quia de occulta jam retributione judicii est, quod eorum mens, malum, quod perpetrat, illuminatur ut videat, sed non conatur, ut vincat: ut quo melius videt, eo deterius pereat; quia et intelligentiae lumen percipit, et actionis pravae tenebras non relinquit. Nam cum acceptam ad adjutorium scientiam negligunt, hanc contra se in testimonium vertunt, et de lumine intelligentiae augent supplicia, quod profecto acceperant ut possent delere peccata. Quorum nimirum, nequitia cum malum agit, quod dijudicat, venturum jam judicium hic degustat: ut cum aeternis suppliciis servatur obnoxia, suo hic interim examine

* Isa. iii, 9. † Gen. xviii, 20.

non sit absoluta: tantoque illic graviora tormenta percipiat, quanto hic malum non deserit, etiam quod ipsa condemnat. Hinc enim Veritas dicit: "Servus, qui cognovit voluntatem Domini sui, et non praeparavit, et non fecit secundum voluntatem ejus, vapulabit multis." * Hinc psalmista ait: "Descendant in infernum viventes." † Vivi quippe, quae circa illos aguntur, sciunt et sentiunt, mortui autem sentire nil possunt. Mortui enim in infernum descenderent, si mala nesciendo perpetrarent. Cum vero sciunt mala, et tamen faciunt, ad iniquitatis infernum viventes miseri sentientesque descendunt.

CAPUT XXXII

Quomodo admonendi, qui subito motu, et qui consulto peccant

ALITER admonendi sunt, qui repentina concupiscentia superantur, atque aliter qui in culpa ex consilio ligantur. Admonendi quippe sunt, quos repentina concupiscentia superat, ut in bello praesentis vitae se quotidie positos attendant, et cor, quod praevidere vulnera non potest, scuto solliciti timoris tegant; ut occulta insidiantis hostis jacula perhorrescant, et in tam caliginoso certamine intentione continua intra mentis castra se muniant. Nam si a circumspectionis sollicitudine cor destituitur, vulneribus aperitur: quia hostis callidus tanto liberius pectus percutit, quanto nudum a providentiae lorica deprehendit. Admonendi sunt, qui repentina concupiscentia superantur, ut curare nimis terrena desuescant; quia intentionem suam dum rebus transitoriis immoderatius implicant, quibus cul-

* Luc. xii, 47. † Ps. liv, 16.

parum jaculis transfigantur, ignorant. Unde et per Salomonem vox percussi et dormientis exprimitur, qui ait: "Verberaverunt me, sed non dolui; traxerunt me, et ego non sensi. Quando evigilabo, et rursum vina reperiam?"* Mens quippe a cura suae sollicitudinis dormiens verberatur et non dolet, quia sicut imminentia mala non prospicit, sic nec, quae perpetraverit, agnoscit. Trahitur, et nequaquam sentit, quia per illecebras vitiorum ducitur, nec tamen ad sui custodiam suscitatur. Quae quidem evigilare optat, ut rursum vina reperiat: quia quamvis somno torporis a sui custodia prematur, vigilare tamen ad seculi curas nititur, ut semper voluptatibus inebrietur, et cum ad illud dormiat, in quo solerter vigilare debuerat, ad aliud vigilare appetit, ad quod laudabiliter dormire potuisset. Hinc superius scriptum est: "Et eris quasi dormiens in medio mari, et quasi sopitus gubernator amisso clavo."† In medio enim mari dormit, qui in hujus mundi tentationibus positus providere motus irruentium vitiorum quasi imminentes undarum cumulos negligit. Et quasi clavum gubernator amittit, quando mens ad regendam navem corporis studium sollicitudinis perdit. Clavum quippe in mari amittere, est intentionem providam inter procellas hujus seculi non tenere. Si enim gubernator clavum sollicite stringit, modo in fluctibus ex adverso navem dirigit, modo ventorum impetus per obliquum findit. Ita cum mens vigilanter animam regit, modo alia superans calcat, modo alia providens declinat, ut et praesentia laborando subjiciat, et contra futura certamina prospiciendo convalescat. Hinc rursum de fortibus supernae patriae bellatoribus dicitur: "Uniuscujusque ensis super femur suum,

* Prov. xxiii, 35. † Ib 34.

propter timores nocturnos."* Ensis enim super femur ponitur, quando acumine sanctae praedicationis prava suggestio carnis edomatur. Per noctem vero caecitas nostrae infirmitatis exprimitur; quia quidquid adversitatis in nocte imminet, non videtur. Uniuscujusque ergo ensis super femur suum ponitur propter timores nocturnos; quia videlicet sancti viri, dum ea, quae non vident, metuunt, ad intentionem certaminis parati semper assistunt. Hinc rursum sponsae dicitur: "Nasus tuus sicut turris, quae est in Libano."† Rem namque, quam oculis non cernimus, plerumque odore praevidemus. Per nasum quoque odores foetoresque discernimus. Quid ergo per nasum Ecclesiae, nisi Sanctorum provida discretio designatur? Qui etiam turri similis, quae est in Libano, dicitur; quia discreta eorum providentia ita in alto sita est, ut tentationum certamina et, priusquam veniant, videat, et contra ea, dum venerint, munita subsistat. Quae enim futura praevidentur, cum praesentia fuerint, minoris virtutis fiunt; quia dum contra ictum quisque paratior redditur, hostis, qui se inopinatum credidit, eo ipso, quo praevisus est, enervatur.

At contra admonendi sunt, qui in culpa ex consilio ligantur, quatenus provida consideratione perpendant, quia dum mala ex judicio faciunt, districtius contra se judicium accendunt; ut tanto eos durior sententia feriat, quanto illos in culpa arctius vincula deliberationis ligant. Citius fortasse delicta poenitendo abluerent, si in his sola praecipitatione cecidissent. Nam tardius peccatum solvitur, quod et per consilium solidatur. Nisi enim mens omni modo aeterna despiceret, in culpa ex judicio non periret. Hoc

* Cant. iii, 8. † Cant. vii, 4.

ergo praecipitatione lapsis per consilium pereuntes differunt, quod, cum hi a statu justitiae peccando considunt, plerumque simul et in laqueum desperationis cadunt. Hinc est, quod per prophetam Dominus non tam praecipitationum prava quam delictorum studia reprehendit dicens: "Ne forte egrediatur ut ignis indignatio mea, et succendatur, et non sit, qui extinguat, propter malitiam studiorum vestrorum."* Hinc iterum iratus dicit: "Visitabo super vos juxta fructum studiorum vestrorum."† Quia ergo peccatis aliis differunt peccata, quae per consilium perpetrantur, non tam prave facta Dominus, quam studia pravitatis insequitur. In factis enim saepe infirmitate, saepe negligentia, in studiis vero malitiosa semper intentione peccatur. Quo contra recte beati viri expressione per prophetam dicitur: "Et in cathedra pestilentiae non sedit."‡ Cathedra quippe judicis esse vel praesidentis solet. In cathedra autem pestilentiae sedere, est ex judicio prava committere; in cathedra pestilentiae sedere, est et ex ratione mala discernere, et tamen ex deliberatione perpetrare. Quasi in perversi consilii cathedra sedet, qui tanta iniquitatis elatione attollitur, ut adimplere malum etiam per consilia conetur. Et sicut assistentibus turbis praelati sunt, qui cathedrae honore fulciuntur, ita delicta eorum, qui praecipitatione corruunt, exquisita per studium peccata transcendunt. Admonendi ergo sunt, ut hinc colligant, qui in culpa etiam se per consilium ligant, qua quandoque ultione feriendi sunt, qui nunc pravorum non socii, sed principes fiunt.

* Jer. iv, 4. † Jer. xxiii, 2. ‡ Ps. i, 1.

CAPUT XXXIII

Quomodo admonendi, qui minimis, sed crebris noxis, et qui minimas cavendes gravibus aliquando immerguntur

ALITER admonendi sunt, qui licet minima, crebro tamen illicita faciunt; atque aliter, qui se a pravis custodiunt, sed aliquando in gravibus demerguntur. Admonendi sunt, qui quamvis in minimis, sed tamen frequenter excedunt, ut nequaquam considerent qualia, sed quanta committunt. Facta enim sua si despiciunt timere cum pensant, debent formidare cum numerant. Altos quippe gurgites fluminum parvae, sed innumerae replent guttae pluviarum. Et hoc agit sentina latenter excrescens, quod patenter procella saeviens. Et minuta sunt, quae erumpunt membris per scabiem vulnera, sed cum multitudo eorum innumerabiliter occupat, sic vitam corporis sicut unum grave inflictum pectori vulnus necat. Hinc videlicet scriptum est: "Qui modica spernit, paulatim decidit."* Qui enim peccata minima flere ac devitare negligit, a statu justitiae non quidem repente, sed partibus totus cadit. Admonendi sunt, qui in minimis frequenter excedunt, ut sollicite considerent, quia nonnunquam in parva deterius, quam in majori culpa peccatum. Major enim quo citius, quia sit culpa, agnoscitur, eo etiam celerius emendatur: minor vero dum quasi nulla creditur, eo pejus, quo et securius in usu retinetur. Unde fit plerumque, ut mens assueta malis levibus nec gravia perhorrescat, atque ad quandam auctori-

* Eccli xix, 1.

tatem nequitiae per culpas nutrita perveniat, et tanto in majoribus contemnat pertimescere, quanto in minimis didicit non timendo peccare.

At contra admonendi sunt, qui se a parvis custodiunt, sed aliquando in gravibus demerguntur, ut sollicite seipsos deprehendant; quia dum cor eorum de custoditis minimis extollitur, ad perpetranda graviora ipso elationis suae barathro devorantur, et dum foris sibi parva subjiciunt, sed per inanem gloriam intus intumescunt, languore superbiae intrinsecus victam mentem etiam foras per mala majora prosternant. Admonendi ergo sunt, qui se a parvis custodiunt, sed aliquando in gravibus demerguntur, ne ubi se stare extrinsecus aestimant, ibi intrinsecus cadant, et juxta districti judicis retributionem elatio minoris justitiae via fiat ad foveam gravioris culpae. Qui enim vane elati boni minimi custodiam suis viribus tribuunt, juste derelicti culpis majoribus obruuntur, et cadendo discunt non fuisse proprium, quod steterunt, ut mala immensa cor reprimant, quod minima bona exaltant. Admonendi sunt, ut considerent, quod et in culpis gravioribus alto reatu se obligant, et tamen plerumque in parvis, quae custodiunt, deterius peccant; quia et in illis iniqua faciunt, et per ista se hominibus, quod iniqui sunt, tegunt. Unde fit, ut cum majora mala perpetrant coram Deo, apertae iniquitatis sit, et cum parva bona custodiunt coram hominibus, simulatae sanctitatis. Hinc est enim, quod pharisaeis dicitur: "Liquantes culicem, camelum autem glutientes."* Ac si aperte diceretur: Minima mala discernitis, majora devoratis. Hinc est, quod rursum ore Veritatis increpantur, cum audiunt: "Decimatis mentham, et anethum, et cyminum; et relinquitis, quae graviora sunt

* Matt. xxiii, 24.

legis, judicium, et misericordiam, et fidem."† Neque enim negligenter audiendum est, quod cum decimari minima diceret, extrema quidem de oleribus maluit, sed tamen bene olentia memorare: ut profecto ostenderet, quia simulatores, cum parvo custodiunt, odorem de se extendere sanctae opinionis quaerunt, et quamvis implere maxima praetermittant, ea tamen minima observant, quae humano judicio longe lateque redoleant.

CAPUT XXXIV

Quomodo admonendi, qui bona nec inchoant, et qui inchoata non absolvunt

ALITER admonendi sunt, qui bona nec inchoant; atque aliter, qui inchoata minime consummant. Qui enim bona nec inchoant, non sunt eis prius aedificanda, quae salubriter diligunt, sed destruenda ea, in quibus semetipsos nequiter versant. Neque enim sequuntur, quae inexperta audiunt, nisi prius, quam perniciosa sint ea, quae sibi sunt experta, deprehendant; quia nec levari appetit, qui et hoc ipsum, quia cecidit, nescit, et qui dolorem vulneris non sentit, salutis remedia non requirit. Prius ergo ostendenda sunt, quam sint vana, quae diligunt, et tunc demum vigilanter intimanda, quam sint utilia, quae praetermittunt. Prius videant fugienda, quae amant, et sine difficultate postmodum cognoscant amanda esse, quae fugiunt. Melius enim inexperta recipiunt, si de expertis, quidquid disputationis audiunt, veraciter cognoscunt. Tunc igitur pleno voto discunt vera bona quaerere, cum certo judicio deprehenderint falsa se vacue tenuisse. Audiant ergo, quod bona

† Matt. xxiii, 23.

praesentia et a delectatione citius transitura sunt, et tamen eorum causa ad ultionem sine transitu permansura; quia et nunc, quod libet, invitis subtrahitur, et tunc, quod dolet, invitis in supplicium reservatur. Itaque eisdem rebus terreantur salubriter, quibus noxie delectantur; ut, dum perculsa mens alta ruinae suae damna conspiciens sese in praecipitium pervenisse deprehendit, gressum post terga revocet, et pertimescens, quae amaverat, discat diligere, quae contemnebat.

Hinc est enim, quod Jeremiae misso ad praedicationem dicitur: "Ecce constitui te hodie super gentes et super regna, ut evellas et destruas, et disperdas et dissipes, et aedifices et plantes."* Quia, nisi prius perversa destrueret, aedificare utiliter recta non posset: nisi ab auditorum suorum cordibus spinas vani amoris evelleret, nimirum frustra in eis sanctae praedicationis verba plantaret. Hinc est, quod Petrus prius evertit, ut postmodum construat, cum nequaquam judaeos monebat, quid jam facerent, sed de his, quae fecerant, increpabat dicens: "Jesum Nazarenum virum approbatum a Deo in vobis virtutibus et prodigiis et signis, quae per illum fecit Deus in medio vestri, sicut vos scitis; hunc definito consilio et praescientia Dei traditum per manus iniquorum affigentes interemistis, quem Deus suscitavit solutis doloribus inferni":† ut videlicet crudelitatis suae cognitione destructi aedificationem sanctae praedicationis, quanto anxie quaererent, tanto utiliter audirent. Unde et illico responderunt: "Quid ergo faciemus, viri fratres?" Quibus mox dicitur: "Agite poenitentiam, et baptizetur unusquisque vestrum."‡ Quae aedi-

* Jer. i, 10. † Act. ii, 22-24. ‡ Act. ii, 37.

ficationis verba profecto contemnerent, nisi prius salubriter ruinam suae destructionis invenissent. Hinc est, quod Saulus, cum super eum coelitus lux emissa resplenduit, non jam, quid recte deberet facere, sed quid prave fecisset, audivit. Nam cum prostratus requireret dicens: "Quis es Domine?" respondetur protinus: "Ego sum Jesus Nazarenus, quem tu persequeris." Et cum repente subjungeret: "Domine, quid me jubes facere?" illico adjungitur: "Surgens ingredere civitatem, et ibi dicetur tibi, quid te oporteat facere." * Ecce de coelo Dominus loquens persecutoris sui facta corripuit, nec tamen illico, quae essent facienda, monstravit. Ecce elationis ejus fabrica jam tota corruerat, et post ruinam suam humilis aedificari requirebat, et cum superbia destruitur, aedificationis tamen verba retinentur; ut videlicet persecutor immanis diu destructus jaceret, et tanto post in bonis solidius surgeret, quanto prius funditus eversus a pristino errore cecidisset. Qui ergo nulla adhuc agere bona coeperunt, a rigiditate antea suae pravitatis correctionis manu evertendi sunt, ut ad statum postmodum rectae operationis erigantur; quia et idcirco altum silvae lignum succidimus, ut hoc in aedificii tegmine sublevemus: sed tamen non repente in fabrica ponitur, ut nimirum prius vitiosa ejus viriditas exsiccetur, cujus quo plus in infimis humor excoquitur, eo ad summa solidius levatur.

At contra admonendi sunt, qui inchoata bona ninime consummant, ut cauta circumspectione considerent, quia, dum proposita non perficiunt, etiam quae fuerant coepta, convellunt. Si enim quod videtur gerendum, sollicita intentione non crescit, etiam quod fuerat bene gestum, decrescit. In hoc quippe mundo humana anima quasi more

* Act. ix 4

navis est contra ictum fluminis conscendentis: uno in loco nequaquam stare permittitur, quia ad ima relabitur, nisi ad summa conetur. Si ergo inchoata bona fortis operantis manus ad perfectionem non sublevat, ipsa operandi remissio contra hoc, quod operatum est, pugnat. Hinc est enim, quod per Salomonem dicitur: "Qui mollis et dissolutus est in opere suo, frater est sua opera dissipantis." * Quia videlicet qui coepta bona districte non exsequitur, dissolutione negligentiae manum destruentis imitatur. Hinc Sardis ecclesiae ab angelo dicitur: "Esto vigilans, et confirma cetera, quae moritura erant: non enim invenio opera tua plena coram Deo meo." † Quia igitur plena coram Deo ejus opera inventa non fuerant, moritura reliqua etiam, quae erant gesta, praedicebat. Si enim quod mortuum in nobis est, ad vitam non accenditur, hoc etiam extinguitur, quod quasi adhuc vivum tenetur. Admonendi sunt, ut perpendant, quod tolerabilius esse potuisset recti viam non arripere, quam arrepta post tergum redire. Nisi enim retro aspicerent, erga coeptum studium nullo torpore languerent. Audiant ergo, quod scriptum est: "Melius erat eis non cognoscere viam justitiae, quam post agnitionem retrorsum converti." ‡ Audiant, quod scriptum est: "Utinam frigidus esses, aut calidus: sed quia tepidus es, et nec frigidus nec calidus, incipiam te evomere ex ore meo." § Calidus quippe est, qui bona studia et arripit et consummat: frigidus vero est, qui consummanda nec inchoat. Et sicut a frigore per teporem transitur ad calorem, ita a calore per teporem reditur ad frigus. Quisquis ergo amisso infidelitatis frigore vivit, sed nequaquam tepore superato excrescit,

* Prov. xviii, 9. † Apoc. iii, 2. ‡ 2 Pet. ii, 21.
§ Apoc. iii, 15.

ut ferveat, procul dubio calore desperato, dum noxio in tepore demoratur, agit, ut frigescat. Sed sicut ante teporem frigus sub spe est, ita post frigus tepore in desperatione. Qui enim adhuc in peccatis est, conversionis fiduciam non amittit. Qui vero post conversionem tepuit, et spem, quae esse potuit de peccatore, subtraxit. Aut calidus ergo quisque esse, aut frigidus quaeritur, ne tepidus evomatur: ut videlicet aut necdum conversus adhuc de se spem conversionis praebeat, aut jam conversus in virtutibus inardescat: ne evomatur tepidus, qui a calore, quem proposuit, torpore ad noxium frigus redit.

CAPUT XXXV

Quomodo admonendi, qui mala clam, et bona palam faciunt; ac qui versa vice

ALITER admonendi sunt, qui mala occulte agunt, et bona publice; atque aliter, qui bona, quae faciunt, abscondunt, et tamen quibusdam factis publice mala de se opinari permittunt. Admonendi enim sunt, qui mala occulte agunt, et bona publice, ut pensent, humana judicia quanta velocitate evolant, divina autem quanta immobilitate perdurant. Admonendi sunt, ut in fine rerum mentis oculos figant; quia et humanae laudis attestatio praeterit, et superna sententia, quae et abscondita penetrat, ad retributionem perpetuam convalescit. Dum igitur occulta mala sua divinis judiciis, recta autem sua humanis oculis anteponunt, et sine teste est bonum, quod publice faciunt, et non sine aeterno teste est, quod latenter delinquunt. Culpas itaque suas occultando hominibus, virtutesque pandendo et unde puniri debeant, abscondentes detegunt, et unde remunerari

poterant, detegentes abscondunt. Quos recte sepulcra dealbata speciosa exterius, sed mortuorum ossibus plena Veritas vocat:* quia vitiorum mala intus contegunt, humanis vero oculis quorundam demonstratione operum de solo foris justitiæ colore blandiuntur. Admonendi itaque sunt, ne quae agunt, recta despiciant, sed ea meriti melioris credant. Valde namque bona sua dijudicant, qui ad eorum mercedem sufficere humanos favores putant. Cum enim pro recto opere laus transitoria quaeritur, aeterna retributione res digna vili pretio venumdatur. De quo videlicet pretio perceptos Veritas dicit: "Amen dico vobis, receperunt mercedem suam."† Admonendi sunt, ut considerent, quia, dum pravos se in occultis exhibent, sed tamen exempla de se publice in bonis operibus praebent, ostendunt sequenda, quae fugiunt; clamant amanda, quae oderunt; vivunt postremo aliis, et sibi moriuntur.

At contra admonendi sunt qui bona occulte faciunt, et tamen quibusdam factis publice de se mala opinari permittunt, ne cum bona semetipsos actionis recta virtute vivificant, in se alios per exemplum pravae aestimationis occidant: ne minus quam se proximos diligant, et cum ipsi salubrem potum vini sorbeant, intentis in sui consideratione mentibus pestiferum veneni poculum fundant. Hi nimirum in uno proximorum vitam minus adjuvant, in altero multum gravant, dum student et recta occulte agere, et quibusdam factis ad exemplum de se prava seminare. Quisquis enim laudis concupiscentiam calcare jam sufficit, aedificationis fraudem perpetrat, si bona, quae agit, occultat: et quasi jactato semine germinandi radices subtrahit, qui opus, quod imitandum est non ostendit. Hinc namque in

*Matt. xxiii, 27. †Matt. vi, 2.

Evangelio Veritas dicit: "Videant opera vestra bona, glorificent Patrem vestrum, qui in coelis est."* Ubi illa quoque sententia promitur, quae longe aliud praecepisse videtur, dicens: "Attendite, ne justitiam vestram faciatis coram hominibus, ut videamini ab eis."†

Quid est ergo, quod opus nostrum et ita faciendum est ne videatur, et tamen ut debeat videri, praecipitur: nisi quod ea, quae agimus, et occultanda sunt, ne ipsi laudemur, et tamen ostendenda sunt; ut laudem coelestis Patris augeamus? Nam cum nos justitiam nostram coram hominibus facere Dominus prohiberet, illico adjunxit: "Ut videamini ab eis." Et cum rursus videnda ab hominibus bona opera nostra praeciperet, protinus subdidit: "Ut glorificent Patrem vestrum, qui in coelis est." Qualiter igitur videnda essent, vel qualiter non videnda, ex sententiarum fine monstravit; quatenus operantis mens opus suum et propter se videri non quaereret, ei tamen hoc propter coelestis Patris gloriam non celaret. Unde fit plerumque, ut bonum opus et in occulto sit, cum fit publice, et rursus in publico, cum agitur occulte. Qui enim in publico bono opere non suam, sed superni Patris gloriam quaerit, quod fecit, abscondit, quia solum illum testem habuit, cui placere curavit. Et qui in secreto suo bono opere deprehendi ac laudari concupiscit, et nullus fortasse vidit, quod exhibuit, et tamen hoc coram hominibus fecit: quia tot testes in bono opere secum duxit, quot humanas laudes in corde requisivit. Cum vero prava aestimatio, in quantum sine peccato valet, ab intuentium mente non tergitur, cunctis mala credentibus, per exemplum culpa propinatur. Unde et plerumque contingit, ut,

*Matt. v, 16. †Matt. vi, 1.

qui negligenter de se mala opinari permittunt, per semetipsos quidem nulla iniqua faciant, sed tamen per eos, qui se imitari fecerint, multiplicius delinquant. Hinc est, quod Paulus immunda quaedam sine pollutione comedentibus, sed imperfectis tentationis scandalum sua hac comestione moventibus dicit: "Videte, ne forte haec licentia vestra offendiculum fiat infirmis."* Et rursum: "Et peribit infirmus in tua conscientia frater, propter quem Christus mortuus est. Sic autem peccantes in fratres, et percutientes conscientiam eorum infirmam in Christum peccatis."† Hinc est, quod Moyses cum diceret: "Non maledices surdo," protinus adjunxit: "Nec coram coeco pones offendiculum."‡ Surdo quippe maledicere, est absenti et non audienti derogare: coram coeco vero offendiculum ponere, est discretam quidem rem agere, sed tamen ei, qui lumen discretionis non habet, scandali occasionem praebere.

CAPUT XXXVI

De exhortatione multis exhibenda, ut sic singulorum virtutes adjuvet, quatenus per hanc contraria virtutibus vitia non excrescant

HAEC sunt, quae praesul animarum in praedicationis diversitate custodiat, ut sollicitus congrua singulorum vulneribus medicamina opponat. Sed cum magni sit studii, ut exhortandis singulis serviatur ad singula, cum valde laboriosum sit unumquemque de propriis sub dispensatione debitae considerationis instruere; longe tamen laboriosius est auditores innumeros ac diversis passionibus laborantes, uno eodem-

* 1 Cor. viii, 9. † 1 Cor. v, 11, 12. ‡ Lev. xix, 14.

que tempore voce unius et communis exhortationis admonitione instruere. Ibi quippe tanta arte vox temperanda est, ut cum diversa sint auditorum vitia, et singulis inveniatur congrua, et tamen sibimetipsi non sit diversa; ut inter passiones medias uno quidem ductu transeat, sed more bicipitis gladii tumores cogitationum carnalium ex diverso latere incidat, quatenus sic superbis praedicetur humilitas, ut tamen timidis non augeatur metus. Sic timidis infundatur auctoritas, ut tamen superbis non crescat effrenatio. Sic otiosis ac torpentibus praedicetur sollicitudo boni operis, ut tamen inquietis immoderatae licentia non augeatur actionis. Sic inquietis ponatur modus, ut tamen otiosis non fiat torpor securus. Sic ab impatientibus extinguatur ira, ut tamen remissis ac lenibus non crescat negligentia. Sic lenes accendantur ad zelum, ut tamen iracundis non addatur incendium. Sic tenacibus infundatur tribuendi largitas, ut tamen prodigis effusionis frena minime laxentur. Sic prodigis praedicetur parcitas, ut tamen tenacibus perituraram rerum custodia non augeatur. Sic incontinentibus laudetur conjugium, ut tamen jam continentes non revocentur ad luxum. Sic continentibus laudetur virginitas corporis, ut tamen in conjugibus despecta non fiat fecunditas carnis. Sic praedicanda sunt bona, ne ex latere juventur et mala. Sic laudanda sunt bona summa, ne desperentur ultima. Sic nutrienda sunt ultima, ne dum sufficere creduntur, nequaquam tendatur ad summa.

CAPUT XXXVII

De exhortatione, quae uni adhibenda est contrariis passionibus laboranti

ET gravis quidem praedicatori labor est, in communis praedicationis voce ad occultos singulorum motus causasque vigilare, et palaestrarum more in diversi lateris arte se vertere: multo tamen acriori labore fatigatur, quando uni contrariis vitiis servienti praedicare compellitur. Plerumque enim quis laetae nimis conspersionis* existit; sed tamen eum repente tristitia oborta immaniter deprimit. Curandum est itaque praedicatori, quatenus sic tergatur tristitia, quae venit ex tempore, ut non augeatur laetitia, quae suppetit ex conspersione, et sic frenetur laetitia, quae ex conspersione est, ut tamen non crescat tristitia, quae venit ex tempore. Iste gravatur usu immoderatae praecipitationis, et aliquando tamen ab eo, quod festine agendum est, eum vis praepedit subito natae formidinis. Ille gravatur usu immoderatae formidinis, et aliquando tamen in eo, quod appetit, temeritate impellitur praecipitationis. Sic itaque in isto reprimatur subito oborta formido, ut tamen non excrescat enutrita diu praecipitatio. Sic in illo reprimatur repente oborta praecipitatio, ut tamen non convalescat impressa ex conspersione formido. Quid autem mirum, si mentium medici ista custodiunt, dum tanta discretionis arte se temperant, qui non corda sed corpora medentur? Plerumque enim debile corpus op-

* Cf. annot. ad III, 3, p. 229.

primit languor immanis, cui languori scilicet obviari adjutoriis fortibus debet, sed tamen corpus debile adjutorium forte non sustinet. Studet igitur, qui medetur, quatenus sic superexistentem morbum subtrahat, ut nequaquam supposita corporis debilitas crescat, ne fortasse languor cum vita deficiat. Tanto ergo adjutorium discretione componit, ut uno eodemque tempore et languori obviet et debilitati. Si igitur medicina corporis indivise adhibita servire divisibiliter potest (tunc enim vere medicina est, quando sic per eam vitio superexistenti succurritur, ut etiam suppositae conspersioni serviatur), cur medicina mentis una eademque praedicatione apposita morum morbis diverso ordine obviare non valeat, quae tanto subtilior agitur, quanto de invisibilibus tractatur?

CAPUT XXXVIII

Quod aliquando leviora vitia relinquenda sunt, ut graviora subtrahantur

SED quia plerumque, dum duorum vitiorum languor irruit, hoc levius, illud fortasse gravius premit, ei nimirum vitio rectius sub celeritate subvenitur, per quod festine ad interitum tenditur. Et si hoc a vicina morte restringi non potest, nisi illud etiam, quod existit, contrarium crescat; tolerandum praedicatori est, ut per exhortationem suam artificioso moderamine unum patiatur crescere, quatenus possit aliud a vicina morte retinere. Quod cum agit, non morbum exaggerat, sed vulnerati sui, cui medicamentum adhibet, vitam servat, ut exquirendae salutis congruum tempus inveniat. Saepe enim quis a ciborum se ingluvie minime temperans jamjamque pene superantis luxuriae stimulis pre-

mitur, qui hujus pugnae metu territus, dum se per abstinentiam restringere nititur, inanis gloriae tentatione fatigatur, in quo nimirum unum vitium nullatenus extinguitur, nisi aliud nutriatur. Quae igitur pestis ardentius insequenda est, nisi quae periculosius premit? Tolerandum nunquam est, ut per virtutem abstinentiae interim arrogantia contra viventem crescat, ne eum per ingluviem a vita funditus luxuria extinguat. Hinc est quod Paulus, cum infirmum auditorem suum perpenderet aut prava adhuc velle agere, aut de actione recta humanae laudis retributione gaudere, ait: "Vis non timere potestatem? bonum fac, et habebis laudem ex illa." * Neque enim ideo bona agenda sunt, ut potestas hujus mundi nulla timeatur, aut per haec gloria transitoriae laudis sumatur. Sed cum infirmam mentem ad tantum robur ascendere non posse pensaret, ut et pravitatem vitaret simul et laudem, praedicator egregius ei admonendo aliquid obtulit, et aliquid tulit. Concedendo enim lenia subtraxit acriora; ut quia ad deserenda cuncta simul non assurgeret, dum in quodam suo vitio animus familiariter relinquitur, a quodam suo sine labore tolleretur.

CAPUT XXXIX

Quod infirmis mentibus omnino non debent alta praedicari

SCIENDUM vero est praedicatori, ut auditoris sui animum ultra vires non trahat, ne, ut ita dicam, dum plus quam valet tenditur, mentis chorda rumpatur. Alta enim quaeque debent multis audientibus contegi, et vix paucis aperiri.

* Rom. xiii, 3.

Hinc namque per semetipsam Veritas dicit: "Quis, putas, est fidelis dispensator et prudens, quem constituit dominus super familiam suam, ut det illis in tempore tritici mensuram?"* Per mensuram quippe tritici exprimitur modus verbi, ne cum angusto cordi incapabile aliquid tribuitur, extra fundatur. Hinc Paulus ait: "Non potui vobis loqui quasi spiritalibus, sed quasi carnalibus. Tamquam parvulis in Christo lac vobis potum dedi, non escam." † Hinc Moyses a secreto Dei exiens coruscantem coram populo faciem velat; quia nimirum turbis claritatis intimae arcana non indicat.‡ Hinc per eum divina voce praecipitur, ut is, qui cisternam foderit, si operire neglexerit, corruente in ea bove vel asino pretium reddat;§ quia ad alta scientiae fluenta perveniens, cum haec apud bruta audientium corda non contegit, poenae reus addicitur, si per verba ejus in scandalum sive munda sive immunda mens capiatur. Hinc ad beatum Job dicitur: "Quis dedit gallo intelligentiam?"‖ Praedicator etenim sanctus, dum caliginoso hoc clamat in tempore, quasi gallus cantat in nocte, cum dicit: "Hora est jam nos de somno surgere."¶ Et rursum: "Evigilate justi, et nolite peccare."** Gallus autem profundioribus horis noctis altos edere cantus solet; cum vero matutinum jam tempus in proximo est, minutas ac tenues voces format; quia nimirum, qui recte praedicat, obscuris adhuc cordibus aperta clamat, nil de occultis mysteriis indicat, ut tunc subtiliora quaeque de coelestibus audiant, cum luci veritatis appropinquant.

* Luc. xii, 42. † 1 Cor. iii, 1. ‡ Exod. xxxiv, 33.
§ Exod. xxi, 33. ‖ Job xxxviii, 36. ¶ Rom. xiii, 11.
** 1 Cor. xv, 34.

CAPUT XL

De opere praedicationis et voce

SEd inter haec ad ea, quae jam superius diximus, caritatis studio retorquemur, ut praedicator quisque plus actibus quam vocibus insonet, et bene vivendo vestigia sequacibus imprimat potius, quam loquendo, quo gradiantur, ostendat. Quia et gallus iste, quem pro exprimenda boni praedicatoris specie in locutione sua Dominus assumit, cum jam edere cantus parat, prius alas excutit, et semetipsum feriens vigilantiorem reddit; quia nimirum necesse est, ut hi, qui verba sanctae praedicationis movent, prius studio bonae actionis evigilent, ne in semetipsis torpentes opere alios excitent voce: prius se per sublimia facta excutiant, et tunc ad bene vivendum alios sollicitos reddant: prius cogitationum alis semetipsos feriant; quidquid in se inutiliter torpet, sollicita investigatione deprehendant, districta animadversione corrigant, et tunc demum aliorum vitam loquendo componant: prius punire propria fletibus curent, et tunc, quae aliorum punienda sunt, denuntient; et antequam verba exhortationis insonent, omne, quod locuturi sunt, operibus clament.

Pars Quarta

Qualiter Praedicator omnibus rite peractis ad semetipsum redeat, ne hunc vel Vita vel Praedicatio extollat

SED quia saepe, dum praedicatio modis congruentibus ubertim funditur, apud semetipsum de ostensione sui occulta laetitia loquentis animus sublevatur, magna cura necesse est, ut timoris laceratione se mordeat; ne qui aliorum vulnera medendo ad salutem revocat, ipse per negligentiam suae salutis intumescat; ne proximos juvando se deserat, ne alios erigens cadat. Nam quibusdam saepe magnitudo virtutis occasio perditionis fuit; ut cum de confidentia virium inordinate securi sunt, per negligentiam inopinate morerentur. Virtus namque cum vitiis renititur, quadam delectatione ejus sibimetipsi animus blanditur: fitque, ut bene agentis mens metum suae circumspectionis abjiciat, atque in sui confidentia secura requiescat; cui jam torpenti seductor callidus omne, quod bene gessit, enumerat, eamque quasi prae ceteris praepollentem in tumore cogitationis exaltat. Unde agitur, ut ante justi judicis oculos fovea mentis sit memoria virtutis; quia reminiscendo, quod gessit, dum se apud se erigit, apud humilitatis auctorem cadit. Hinc namque superbienti animae dicitur: "Quo pulchrior es, descende, et dormi cum incircumcisis." * Ac si aperte diceretur: Quia ex

* Ezec. xxxii, 19.

virtutum decore te elevas, ipsa tua pulchritudine impelleris, ut cadas. Hinc sub Jerusalem specie virtute superbiens anima reprobatur, cum dicitur: "Perfecta eras in decore meo, quem posueram super te, dicit Dominus, et habens fiduciam in pulchritudine tua fornicata es in nomine tuo." * Fiducia quippe suae pulchritudinis animus attollitur, cum de virtutum meritis laeta apud se securitate gloriatur. Sed per hanc eandem fiduciam ad fornicationem ducitur; quia cum interceptam mentem cogitationes suae decipiunt, hanc maligni spiritus per innumera vitia seducendo corrumpunt. Notandum vero, quod dicitur: "Fornicata es in nomine tuo": quia, cum respectum mens superni rectoris deserit, laudem protinus privatam quaerit, et sibi arrogare incipit omne bonum, quod ut largitoris praeconio serviret, accepit; opinionis suae gloriam dilatare desiderans satagit, ut mirabilis cunctis innotescat. In suo ergo nomine fornicatur, quae legalis thori connubium deserens corruptori spiritui in laudis appetitu substernitur. Hinc David ait: "Tradidit in captivitatem virtutem eorum, et pulchritudinem eorum in manus inimici." † In captivitatem etenim virtus, et pulchritudo in manus inimici traditur, cum deceptae menti antiquus hostis ex boni operis elatione dominatur; quae tamen virtutis elatio, quamvis plene non superat, utcunque tamen et electorum animum saepe tentat; sed cum sublevatus destituitur, destitutus ad formidinem revocatur. Hinc etenim David iterum ait: "Ego dixi in abundantia mea, non movebor in aeternum." ‡ Sed quia de confidentia virtutis intumuit, paulo post quid pertulit, adjunxit: "Avertisti faciem tuam a me, et factus sum conturbatus." § Ac si aperte dicat: Fortem

* Ezec. xvi, 14. † Ps. lxxvii, 61. ‡ Ps. xxix, 7.
§ Ps. xxix, 8.

me inter virtutes credidi, sed quantae infirmitatis sim, derelictus agnovi. Hinc rursum dicit: "Juravi, et statui custodire judicia justitiae tuae." * Sed quia ejus virium non erat manere in custodia, quam jurabat, debilitatem suam protinus turbatus invenit. Unde et ad precis opem repente se contulit, dicens: "Humiliatus sum usquequaque, Domine, vivifica me secundum verbum tuum." † Nonnunquam vero superna moderatio, priusquam per munera provehat, infirmitatis memoriam ad mentem revocat, ne de acceptis virtutibus intumescat. Unde Ezechiel propheta, quoties ad contemplanda coelestia ducitur, prius filius hominis vocatur: ac si hunc aperte Dominus admoneat, dicens: Ne de his, quae vides, in elatione cor subleves, cautus perpende, quod es: ut cum summa penetras, esse te hominem recognoscas, quatenus dum ultra te raperis, ad temetipsum sollicitus infirmitatis tuae freno revoceris. Unde necesse est, ut cum virtutum nobis copia blanditur, ad infirma sua mentis oculus redeat, seseque salubriter deorsum premat; nec recta, quae egit, sed quae agere neglexit, aspiciat: ut dum cor ex memoria infirmitatis atteritur, apud humilitatis auctorem robustius in virtute solidetur. Quia et plerumque omnipotens Deus idcirco rectorum mentes, quamvis ex magna parte perficit, imperfectas tamen ex parva aliqua parte derelinquit: ut cum miris virtutibus rutilant, imperfectionis suae taedio tabescant, et nequaquam se de magnis erigant, dum adhuc contra minima innitentes laborant; sed quia extrema non valent vincere, de praecipuis actibus non audeant superbire.

Ecce, bone vir, reprehensionis meae necessitate compulsus, dum monstrare qualis esse de-

* Ps. cxviii, 106. † Ps. cxviii, 107.

beat pastor invigilo, pulchrum depinxi hominem pictor foedus; aliosque ad perfectionis littus dirigo, qui adhuc in delictorum fluctibus versor. Sed in hujus quaeso vitae naufragio orationis tuae me tabula sustine, ut quia pondus proprium deprimit, tui meriti manus me levet.

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